BLAINE

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J. G. Blaine

LIFE

OF

HON. JAMES G. BLAINE

BY HIS INTIMATE FRIEND AND ASSOCIATE, THE LATE

H. J. RAMSDELL, ESQ.,

FOR TWENTY YEARS A PROMINENT JOURNALIST AT WASHINGTON.

PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED.

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TO

THE INNUMERABLE FRIENDS AND ADMIRERS

OF

THE HON. JAMES G. BLAINE,

THIS RECORD OF HIS CAREER

IS

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

Longfellow said:

> "Lives of great men all remind us,
> We can make our lives sublime."

James Gillespie Blaine is a great man, and the study of his life may well inspire American youth to pursue the morally sublime and, if possible, embody it in their lives.

His career began in the midst of hardships, but with indomitable courage he faced every adverse fortune and worked his way through college, and thence through the post of teacher, editor and statesman, to eminence in the councils of the nation and to an enviable place in the hearts of his countrymen. His life-story is here told that his numerous admirers may have the pleasure of its perusal, and the young men of our land may have the benefit of his illustrious career before them.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

ANCESTRY AND EARLY LIFE.

"Blood"—Maternal Ancestry—Paternal Ancestry—Ancestral Possessions—Revolutionary Record—Birth-place—Early "Schooling"—Youthful Sports—Early Struggles—At Lancaster, Ohio—The Young Collegian—College Life—A Hero—Graduation—"The Duty of an Educated American"—Prophetic Utterances—Teaching—Western Military Institute—Philadelphia Institution for the Blind—Miss Stanwood—Removal to Maine—The Kennebec *Journal*—Growing Reputation—In the Legislature—Chairman of the State Committee—The Portland *Advertiser*—An Author 19–39

CHAPTER II.

POLITICAL AND OFFICIAL CAREER.

Growing Popularity in Maine—Fremont's Nomination—Blaine's First Speech—His First Public Office—To the Legislature—Speaker—To Congress—Blaine and President Lincoln—At His Desk—Drafted—Reëlected to Congress—Leader of the House—Admirable Work—Wonderful Endurance—Habits of Life—Quick Perception—Good Judgment—Firm Decision 40–50

CHAPTER III.

PERSONAL TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS.

Keen Humor—Quaint Anecdote—General Literature—Modern Oratory—Coolness—Readiness—Repartee—Courage—Candor—Clearness of Statement—Satire—Graciousness—Courtesy—Studiousness—Persistency—Organizing Victory—Dignified—Religious Associations—Diplomatic 51–65

CHAPTER IV.

WARM-HEARTED AND BELOVED.

Blaine's Love of Home—An American—Letter to Washington, Pa.—Early Popularity Undiminished—Opinions from Augusta—"Unstinted Praise"—"A Model of Honor"—Absolute Unanimity—Practical Generosity—Dr. Ecob's Statement—Conscience in a Vote 66–76

CHAPTER V.

AN AMERICAN OF THE AMERICANS.

His Own Nation First—American in all Aspirations—Active Patriotism—Steamers to Brazil—Subsidizing Steamers—"Everything American"—Shrinking Trade—Tributary to Great Britain—Bi-metallic Currency—Trade Dollars 77–85

CHAPTER VI.

A FRIEND OF LABOR AND ENTERPRISE.

Accustomed to Work—Sympathy with Workers—Favoring American Industry—Elevating Laborers—Urging Honest Money—Greenback Delusions—Fair Wages—Independent Farmers—The Newer States—Coolie Labor—Labor-Saving Machinery—Unpaid Toilsmen . . 86–96

CHAPTER VII.

THE ORATOR.

His Public Speaking—Personal Appearance—Spirit—Garfield's Eulogy—A Magnificent Peroration—Directness—Force—Pointedness—His Political Creed 97–102

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BRILLIANT SPEAKER.

A High Office—British Speakership—American Speakership—Its Peculiar Difficulties—Immense Responsibility—Committees—Chairmanships—Erratic Members—Assigning the Floor—In the Chair—Starting Business—Avoiding Confusion—Dexterity—Fairness—Friendliness—Sagacity—Retirement from the Speakership—Closing Address—Salvos of Applause 103–115

CHAPTER IX.

DARKER DAYS.

Gathering Clouds—Opposing Combinations—"The Rebel Brigadiers"—Leading the Minority—"Drawing the Fire"—General Amnesty—The Force Bill—Responsibility of Jeff Davis—Opposed by Senator Hill—The "Maine Yankee"—Skirmishing with "Sunset" Cox—Garfield in the Fight—Charge of the "Plumed Knight"—A Parliamentary Stroke—

An Era of Investigations—Aspersions Multiplying—Personal Explanation—Uncomfortable "Flea-Hunt"—"Drag-net" Resolutions—Grand Explosion—Mr. Mulligan—"The Knight" Again in the Saddle—A Suppressed Dispatch—"Schoolmaster from Maine"—No Condemnation—Sunstroke—Convention of '76—The Popular Will Defeated 116–144

CHAPTER X.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

Garfield and Blaine Meet—Their Growing Friendship—Garfield's First Choice—An Honorable Post—A Splendid Acceptance—The Terrible Tragedy—Confidential Relations—Brief but Burdensome—The Medical Telegrams—Perplexing Diplomacy—Central American Affairs—The Nicaraguan Canal—Clayton-Bulwer Treaty—The *Hegemony*—Peruvian Affairs—More Investigations—A "Smelling Committee"—Blaine's Peace Policy 145–172

CHAPTER XI.

MR. BLAINE'S HOMES.

How Eminent Men Live—Dupont Circle, Washington—Brick and Brown Stone—Exterior—Interior—State Street, Augusta, Me.—Exterior—Interior 173–181

CHAPTER XII.

SEEN BY ENGLISH EYES.

London *World's* Correspondent—Fifteenth Street, Washington—House Described—Company—Family—Adornments—Greeting—Personal Appearance 182–187

CHAPTER XIII.

KEENNESS OF PERCEPTION.

High Order of Perception—A Specious Bill—Merciless Exposure—Resistless Ridicule—The Real Motive Exposed—Governor Kent's Opinion—Disparaging Questions—Thad. Stevens' Opinion 188–200

CHAPTER XIV.

"STIRRING UP STRIFE."

A Popular Accusation—Southern School-Books—Arithmetical Examples—Rhetoric for Schools—Personal Skirmishing—Historic Addresses—Vapid Rhetoric—Threatening Condemned 201–210

CHAPTER XV.

WITHERING SARCASM.

Coercing the Executive—Stopping Appropriations—Cutting off Supplies—New Doctrines—Dangerous Theories—Prophetic Utterances—Withering Denunciation 211–219

CHAPTER XVI.

IRISH-AMERICAN AND GERMAN QUESTIONS.

Scotch-Irish Ancestry—Friendly Sons of St. Patrick—Blaine's Letter to an Irishman—Prosperity of the Irish—The Steubens at Yorktown—Honors to German Patriots—Thanks from the German Emperor . . . 220–227

CHAPTER XVII.

ENFRANCHISED OR DISFRANCHISED.

The Negro Voter—Questions Concerning Him—Wrong Views—The Case Settled—An Elevating Power—Educational Test—Property Test—Enfranchisement Right 228–233

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CHINESE QUESTION.

No True Immigration—Low Character of Comers—Never Assimilate—Degrade Labor—Danger Near—No Official Endorsement—Retaliation 234–237

CHAPTER XIX.

AMERICAN SHIP BUILDING AND COMMERCE.

Dependence on England—Help for Internal Improvements—Great Britain's Example—French Policy—Italian Policy—What to do—Enter the Race—Curtail Naval Expenditures—Subsidize American Ships—Invite Competition 238–247

CHAPTER XX.

MUNICIPAL DEBT.

A Quadruple Burden—How it Grows—Debt Necessary—Debts Needless—Results of Debt—Remedies—Jefferson's Rule 248–251

CHAPTER XXI.

IRREDEEMABLE PAPER CURRENCY.

A Sound Financial Policy—Evils of Paper Money—A Forced Exception—Legal Tender Notes—Absolute Necessity 252–254

CHAPTER XXII.

PURITY OF THE BALLOT BOX.

Election Frauds—Black Voters Intimidated—White Southern Voters Triumphant—No Abridgment Allowable—Reduced Representation—Fair Elections Everywhere—Peace Desired—Purity Demanded—Equal Rights, but Nothing More 255–262

CHAPTER XXIII.

AN AFTER-DINNER SPEECH.

A Crucial Test—New England Dinner—A Brother-in-law—New England Influence—Abused—Aspiring—Serious Comments—"May Flower" Furniture—Died Without the Sight 263–268

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE PLUMED KNIGHT.

An Accepted Title—Its Author—The Demand of '76—The Man who met the Demand—A Grand Year—An Armed Warrior—A Plumed Knight—A Shining Lance—A Standard Bearer—The Prince of Parliamentarians—The Leader of Leaders—Knightly Deeds 269–273

CHAPTER XXV.

OUT OF POLITICS.

Withdrawal from the Cabinet—In his Pleasant Home—At his History—No part in Politics—Nominated for the Presidency—The Campaign—Defeated—In Private Life—Further Honors Refused . 274–276

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Hon. James G. Blaine (steel), ... *Frontispiece.*

Birthplace of Hon. James G. Blaine, ... 23

Washington and Jefferson College, ... 33

Burial-Place of Blaine's Parents, ... 69

Retiring from the Speakership, ... 113

Mr. Blaine at Garfield's Assassination, . . . 151

Blaine's Mansion at Washington, D. C., ... 175

Blaine's Residence at Augusta, Me., ... 179

Capitol at Washington, ... 195

LIFE

OF

JAMES G. BLAINE

CHAPTER I.

ANCESTRY AND EARLY LIFE.

LONG usage has established a custom that cannot be broken at this late day. In biographical writing the author must give dates and facts so elaborately and so accurately that no possibility of dispute can arise. A great man's birth, his early life, his struggles with wealth or poverty, his final triumph—all must be laid open to the public. It is not always the poor who have their trials in early life. It was said ages ago that human existence was merely a world of compensations. What money can buy, the poor lad often needs; but he often possesses traits of character, independent thought and stalwart energy that no money can pay for. As a general proposition it is as hard to struggle against great wealth as against close poverty. A thoughtful observer of human life and human frailties will say that the carefully reared poor boy has the advantage in the life fight over the boy who can always have whatever money can buy. Necessity is the great teacher and the great example. It is harder for the rich boy to rise in honest endeavor than the poor boy, for with the poor boy it is necessity,

while with the rich boy it is a sort of amusement. To his mind his future is secure; he knows he need not work for his living; he feels no anxiety, and his future in ease and luxury is established beyond a question.

And so we pass to the life of the candidate of the Republican party in the great election of 1884, and in his life is illustrated the principle suggested in the brief remarks above.

James Gillespie Blaine, who was nominated by the Republican party assembled in convention at Chicago, June 3d, for President of the United States, was born on the 31st of January, 1830. Good, solid Americans, the men who till the soil, who contribute to the material prosperity of the country in other walks of life, who add to the glory of our institutions and have made us respected as a nation, have very little regard for what is known as "blood." As a people, we are inclined to take a man as we find him. A nobleman may be found behind a homespun jacket, and a noble intellect may be covered by a rusty hat. On the other hand, broadcloth may cover a dishonest heart, a silk hat may crown an empty head, and a great name may belong to one who has never done anything praiseworthy, and who is incapable of a noble aspiration. In Mr. Blaine is represented both a great and honorable ancestry, and the career of a boy of the people. He is proud of his ancestors, as he has reason to be,

but at the same time he likes to dwell upon the different phases of the struggles which brought him to his present eminence.

His ancestors, both on the side of his father and his mother, were of high and honorable standing. His mother's name was Gillespie, and her family was distinguished in Pennsylvania for many generations, even ante-dating the Revolution. Neal Gillespie, Mr. Blaine's maternal grandfather, was a man of large property, and was honored, respected and liked by the people of the whole surrounding country. Mr. Blaine's father (Ephraim L. Blaine) was born and reared in Carlisle, Cumberland county, a beautiful village nestling in one of the most picturesque valleys that the hand of nature ever glorified. The father, after an extended tour in Europe, South America and the West Indies, returned to spend the greater portion of his life in the beautiful county of Washington, where he died before his son was fully grown. He went to this section about 1818, having the largest landed possessions of any man of his age in Western Pennsylvania, owning an estate which, had it been preserved, would have amounted to-day to many millions. As a single item in that estate, it may be interesting to mention that, in 1825, Mr. Blaine's father deeded to the Economites the splendid tract of land on which their town, with all its improvements and all its wealth, now stands. The price was $25,000 for a property

whose value to-day, even if unimproved, would be a princely fortune. There were also timber tracts on the Allegheny and coal tracts on the Monongahela, at that day of no special value, which now represent large fortunes in the hands of those lucky enough to hold them. Very near the large tracts owned by his father and grandfather, Mr. Blaine is now the possessor of one of the most valuable coal properties in the Monongahela valley. In area it is but a fraction of that which he might have hoped to inherit, but in value it is much greater than the whole landed estate of his father fifty years ago.

Mr. Blaine's paternal great-grandfather was a colonel in the Pennsylvania line in the Revolutionary war. He was the intimate friend of General Washington, and was commissary general of the northern department of Washington's army. He was a man of large means, and from his own purse, and from contributions obtained from friends, he advanced large sums of money toward purchasing supplies for the army during that memorable winter at Valley Forge. Washington himself attributed the preservation of his troops from absolute starvation to the heroic and self-sacrificing efforts of Colonel Blaine.

The birth-place of the great Maine statesman was Indian Hill Farm, Washington County, Pa., opposite the little town of Brownsville, on the Monongahela river. The home in which he first

BIRTHPLACE OF JAMES G. BLAINE, AT WEST BROWNSVILLE, PA.

saw the light is still standing, though it is now in a hopeless state of decay. It is of stone, and was built by Mr. Blaine's great-grandfather before the Revolutionary war. It is said to have been the first stone house built on the west bank of the Monongahela river. There were no neighbors; and on that dreary, bleak and stormy morning in January, fifty-four years ago, it was a struggle between life and death for him whose name is to-day in everybody's mouth. In all there were eight children—five sons and three daughters—born to the Blaine family; but James, whose name is now so prominent, and who has been honored throughout the country for twenty years, is the only one who has achieved distinction.

Mr. Blaine was very carefully educated. His whole family, both on his father's and his mother's side, had every advantage, and even in that early day they appreciated the value of what was then known as "schooling." At a considerable distance from the family homestead there was a little red school-house, and James began his education there. He was then but six years old. Whether he was bright or dull at this age cannot be discovered now. That he would be sometime President of the United States was not contemplated, and so no more attention was paid to him than to any other boy in school. The two teachers to whom he first recited as a barefooted boy are still living. One is Mary Ann Graves, who came from a

Quaker family. She is now Mrs. Johnson, and is living near Canton, Ohio. The other is Mrs. Matilda Dorsey, who still remains at Brownsville. He learned what he could at this country school. During the vacations he played at work on the old farm, which contained about five hundred acres. Farming, however, was not his bent at that time, though in later life he learned to appreciate the glory of the country, and to love its manifold beauties. He gave his idle hours to boating and to horses. It was his delight to mount vicious colts that no one else would trust, and among the people in Washington County it is remembered that Jim. Blaine always conquered every colt he mounted. He had many ugly falls, and some broken limbs, but he never gave up a horse that he intended to "break."

Mr. Blaine's family was not what may be called poor in his young days, and he never lacked the necessaries of life, but he never had in his youth the unlimited means which the rich man's sons enjoy to-day. In this connection an extract from his matchless oration on Garfield, delivered in the Capitol, at Washington, in the presence of the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the principal officers of Government, may not be inappropriate, as, in a measure, his own experience is therein portrayed. There were present on that occasion, besides the members of both Houses of Congress, the President of the United States and

his cabinet, the foreign ministers resident in Washington, the judges of the highest courts, and distinguished men in nearly every walk in life. Speaking of Garfield's poverty, Mr. Blaine then said:

"No manly man feels anything of shame in looking back to early struggles with adverse circumstances, and no man feels a worthier pride than when he has conquered the obstacles to his progress. But no one of noble mould desires to be looked upon as having occupied a menial position, as having been repressed by a feeling of inferiority, or as having suffered the evils of poverty until relief was found at the hand of charity. General Garfield's youth presented no hardships which family love and family energy did not overcome, subjected him to no privations which he did not cheerfully accept, and left no memories save those which were recalled with delight, and transmitted with profit and with pride."

In the same oration Mr. Blaine used the following happy illustrations:

"His father dying before he was two years old, Garfield's early life was one of privation, but its poverty has been made indelicately and unjustly prominent. Thousands of readers have imagined him as the ragged, starving child, whose reality too often greets the eye in the squalid sections of our large cities. General Garfield's infancy and youth had none of this destitution, none of these

pitiful features appealing to the tender heart, and to the open hand of charity. He was a poor boy in the same sense in which Henry Clay was a poor boy; in which Andrew Jackson was a poor boy; in which Daniel Webster was a poor boy; in the sense in which a large majority of the eminent men of America in all generations have been poor boys. Before a great multitude, in a public speech, Mr. Webster bore this testimony: 'It did not happen to me to be born in a log cabin, but my elder brothers and sisters were born in a log cabin raised amid the snow-drifts of New Hampshire, at a period so early that when the smoke rose first from its rude chimney, and curled over the frozen hills, there was no similar evidence of a white man's habitation between it and the settlements on the rivers of Canada. Its remains still exist. I make to it an annual visit. I carry my children to it to teach them the hardships endured by the generations which have gone before them. I love to dwell on the tender recollections, the kindred ties, the early affections, and the touching narratives and incidents which mingle with all I know of this primitive family abode.'"

At the age of eleven, young Blaine was sent to school at Lancaster, Ohio, where he lived in the family of his relative, Thomas Ewing, then Secretary of the Treasury. At this time he was well advanced in his studies. His father was a well-educated man, and had taken much interest in

his son's studies, and his grandfather, Neal Gillespie, a very able and accomplished scholar, never lost sight of the young man's educational training. Young Blaine was drilled in all English studies by his grandfather, and from him he no doubt got his taste for history, which was so early developed, and the cultivation of which he has retained and practiced to the present time. At nine years of age he recited to his grandfather Plutarch's Lives, and it is said that at that early age the young student knew Plutarch almost by heart.

When he was a little more than thirteen years of age he was sent to Washington, Pa., to what was then known as Washington College. He was large for his age, and was physically angular; but his earnest face and his determination to know whatever belonged to his new position, gave him a prominent place at once among his schoolfellows. He was a hard student, and it was not long before he was accorded the first place in scholarship, and was the acknowledged leader in everything that related to his class. Because he was not always "moping" and star-gazing when away from his studies, many thought he did little in the way of study. He was always first in everything, from the time he entered college until his graduation. He excelled especially in literature and mathematics.

A college mate of Mr. Blaine's, who was subsequently a distinguished officer in the Confeder-

ate army, gives some interesting particulars of the college life of the now prominent statesman. These points, though not wholly agreeing with some here recorded, are given as throwing light on those early days. "At the college," says this biographer, "with two or three hundred students from all sections of the country, Blaine was from his first entrance a leader. Endowed with a splendid physique, he was foremost in all athletic sports. He is not remembered as a hard student among his classmates, as one who burned the midnight oil. It was not necessary for him to do this, as he learned everything quickly and easily, and his standing in his classes was always among the very first. In the annual commencements and the frequent contests of the rival literary societies of the college, he was never conspicuous as a debater or wrangler, but he was known and acknowledged as the power that managed and controlled all these things. Goethe has said: 'One builds his talents in the stillnesses and builds his character in the storms of the world.'

"To the new boys and young freshmen Blaine was always a hero. To them he was uniformly kind, ever ready to assist and advise them, and to make smooth and pleasant their initiation into college life. His handsome person and neat attire; his ready sympathy and prompt assistance; his frank, generous nature, and his brave, manly bearing, made him the best-known, the best-loved

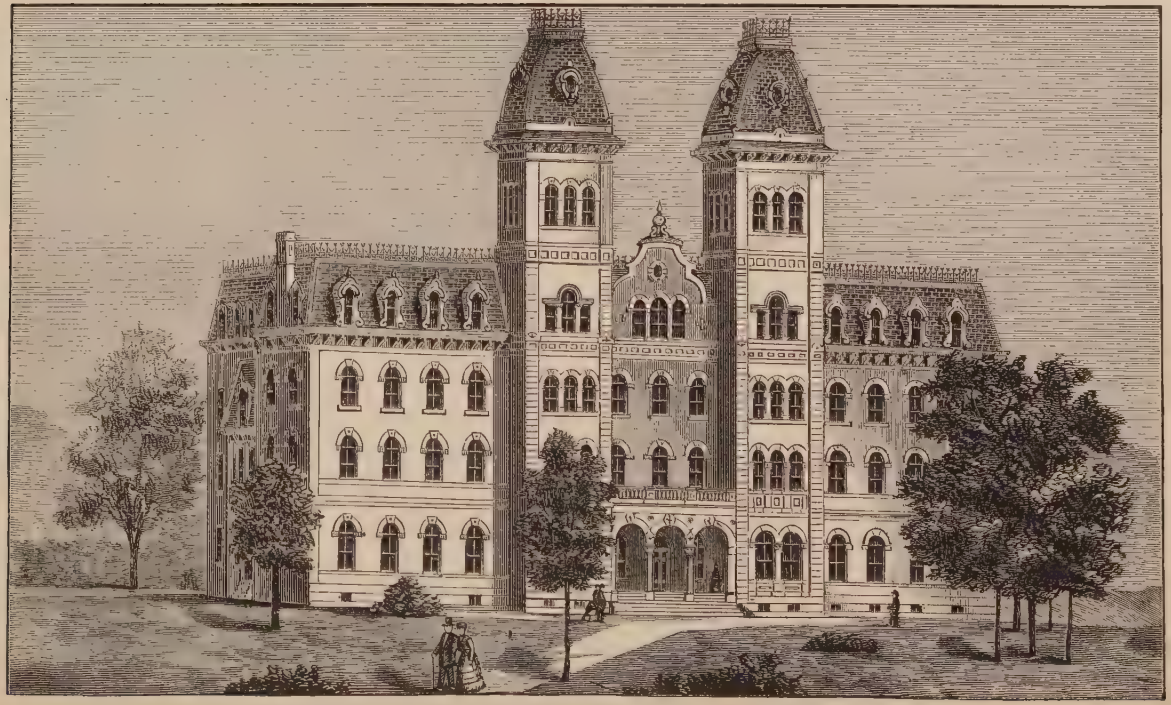
and the most popular boy at college. He was the arbiter among younger boys in all their disputes, and the authority with those of his own age on all questions. He was always for the 'under dog in the fight.' Like most college boys, he had his sobriquet. Owing to the fact that he was possessed of a somewhat prominent, though shapely, proboscis, he received the appellation of 'Nosey Blaine,' which clung to him through his entire college life. His was one of those noses that would have been the pride and admiration of Napoleon I, and would doubtless have ranked high and gained great glory among the other prominent noses, whose owners were selected by Napoleon to form the shining ranks of his favorite generals, as a prominent nose was considered by him a certain indication of genius and courage. After the usual term at college he graduated with distinguished honor, and carried with him into the world the enduring affection of all those who knew him and with whom he was associated in his alma mater."

Mr. Blaine graduated when a little over seventeen years of age. His class numbered thirty-three. In speaking of his college days, Mr. Blaine says that he was obliged to study hard, and that he was very quiet and an industrious student. His class was composed of young men who were determined to succeed, and the emulation was great, though friendly. The students

did not strive to see how little they could do, but their determination was to excel in everything. So Mr. Blaine's college days were not holidays, as has been said. He was one of three who took the honors. He was selected to deliver the English salutatory and also an oration. The subject of the latter was "The Duty of an Educated American." The oration of nearly forty years ago, viewed in the light of to-day, is rather remarkable for a boy of seventeen. It is to be regretted that the consent of the distinguished orator cannot be obtained to the publication of the whole address. The prediction in regard to the Pacific slope, that magnificent continent in itself, was prophetic, and is here given:

"The sphere of labor for the educated American is continually enlarging. But recently we added the vast domain of the Lone Star Republic to our glorious union. The war to which that act gave rise, is now in victorious progress, and will not end without another great accession of territory—possibly carrying our flag beyond the Great American Desert to the shores of the Pacific sea. Where our armies march population follows, and the field of duty for the scholar is to be continental in extent, and as varied as the demands of a progressive civilization."

We have only to bear in mind the fact that this address was delivered in September, 1847, the very year that gold was discovered in California.



WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON COLLEGE, WASHINGTON, PA.

Those then members of the faculty of Washington College are all dead, but nearly all of Mr. Blaine's school fellows are still alive. At the quarter-centennial of the class, held in 1872, twenty-nine of the thirty-three were living, and every one of them was a man of position and character in his community. While Mr. Blaine was in the House of Representatives there were two of his classmates also members, John V. Le Moyne, of Illinois, and William S. Moore, of Pennsylvania, who represented the old Washington County District. At the same time, James H. Hopkins, of Pittsburg, Pa., and George W. Morgan, of Ohio, both Washington College students, were also members of the House.

From this point in life Mr. Blaine began to carve out his own future. In those days the young college graduate did not loaf about home, a village beau, smoking cigarettes and devoting most of his time to his hair—at least Blaine did not. He struck out at once to seek his fortune. It was a very lucky strike for him, for if he had not struck out as he did, and had not gone to Kentucky, and had not located near Millersburg, he might never have met Miss Harriet Stanwood, a woman who will "do him good, and not evil, all the days of his life,"

Mr. Blaine, after he left college, went to Blue Lick Springs, Kentucky, and became one of the professors in the Western Military Institute. In

this school there were about 450 boys. A gentleman now living in Washington (who was also, by the way, an officer in the Confederate service) was a student in the school. He well remembers Blaine, and describes him as a thin, handsome, earnest young man, with the same fascinating manners he has now. He was very popular with the boys, who trusted him and made friends with him from the first. He knew the given names of every one, and he knew their shortcomings and their strong points, and to this day he asks about this boy and that who went to school at Blue Lick Springs, then a very popular watering-place.

It was at Millersburg, twenty miles distant, that Mr. Blaine first met Miss Stanwood, who belonged to one of the old families of Maine, and she afterwards became his wife. Blaine, after an experience of a year or two, discovered that he was not born to be a school teacher, and he returned to Pennsylvania, where he taught and studied law.

In Philadelphia an interesting memorial of his vocation as teacher is preserved in the form of a manuscript history of the Institution for the Instruction of the Blind, in which Mr. Blaine taught for two years. It is written throughout in a neat, angular hand, free from blots and erasures, and complete from the founding of the school to the day on which the writer resigned. Dr. Chapin, the president, bears high testimony to

the young professor's capacity and fidelity, and indicates that his strong, positive nature, argumentative turn and taste for research were already manifest.

In 1853 he removed to Maine, and located at Augusta, the birth-place of his wife. On arriving here, Mr. Blaine purchased a half interest in the Kennebec *Journal*, and that natural bent of his mind for the career of journalism which had before been displayed only in occasional articles, showed its full force. It led him thenceforward to discard the profession of teaching, upon which he had entered with such promise in Philadelphia and Kentucky, and also the practice of law, in which he was also assured of success.

Mr. Blaine's preparation for his new work on the *Journal* was in every way characteristic. He took down the files, or bound volumes of the paper for past years, and plunged into an earnest study of their contents, in which he persevered until he had thoroughly mastered not merely the tone and position of the paper (which was the official organ at first of the Whig and then of the Republican party), but also the minutiæ of politics and public affairs in every county in the State. Only his prodigious memory, which is a quality that cannot be overstated in depicting him, his intuitive grasp of facts, and his keen comprehension, enabled him fully to accomplish this feat; but it also serves to illustrate afresh in

his case the old quotation, "genius is only an infinite capacity for hard work."

Thus equipped, he threw himself into the midst of his new duties with his usual energy. The *Journal* was made a thoroughly live and aggressive paper, but no one could deny that it was at the same time eminently just both in praise and blame. By its vigor and fearlessness, combined with its young editor's rare insight into men and affairs, it became a power in the State, and Mr. Blaine's reputation spread into adjoining commonwealths as that of a man rapidly rising into prominence. The substantial success of the paper was also very marked under his management, and it was never more prosperous.

During the four years that Mr. Blaine spent in this active and exciting conduct of a leading political journal, he still found time, with his habits of rapid work, for keeping up his studies of history and general literature, studies which his powers of mind made very fruitful. He has a command of both these subjects, fresh and unobscured in his mind, and ready to be put into instant use, which makes him remarkable among his compeers in political life.

In 1858, Mr. Blaine was elected to the Legislature, and also made Chairman of the Republican State Committee, honors to which his powers as a political organizer and leader already fully enti-

tled him. He remained Chairman by successive elections for many years.

On relinquishing the conduct of the Kennebec *Journal*, he was beset with offers on every side, by those who appreciated his talents and wished to gain the aid of them. He finally accepted the editorship of the Portland *Advertiser*, though still continuing his residence at Augusta.

About this time he made his first essay in a production more permanent than the day-to-day writing of journalism, and like his first manuscript and recent volume, it was historical in character, being a life of Hon. Luther Severance, who had established the Kennebec *Journal* nearly thirty years before. In a pamphlet of forty pages the biographer set forth with his unfailing literary skill the main facts in the interesting career of this widely-known and very popular New England journalist, who was also minister to the Hawaiian Kingdom under President Taylor in 1850. The work was received with great favor.

CHAPTER II.

POLITICAL AND OFFICIAL CAREER.

GREAT men are sometimes beholden to occasion for the development of their qualities. Mr. Blaine had attained prominence in his adopted State, not only as a writer and journalist, but also as a political manager, before his capacity for public speaking was suspected, perhaps even by himself. It was known, of course, that in addition to his command of the pen, he was fluent and effective in private conference, could express his views clearly and carry his point in an argument, but he had rather an aversion to the platform, or, at all events, a diffidence that kept him from appearing there. In 1856 he was a delegate to the memorable Convention at Philadelphia which nominated Fremont. On his return to Augusta, at a mass meeting held to ratify the choice, some of the old citizens contrived to get him upon the stand and put him forward simply to tell the story of the Convention, in response to a general request. The congenial task soon warmed him to his work; he found confidence and words together, and the maiden speech of his public career was a pronounced success. From this time on there was no

thought of confining his labors to the sanctum or the council-chamber. He made speeches in nearly every part of the State, and was heartily greeted as a solid and convincing "stump" orator, acquitting himself in this undertaking, as in all the others that have fallen to his lot, in a manner easily the first among all competitors. His aid was eagerly enlisted in subsequent campaigns, but it may be remarked that this never led him to make his oratory a matter of price. His efforts were given freely and spontaneously, for the good of the cause, and he would not accept pay or allow a charge to be made for hearing him.

The first public office held by Mr. Blaine came to him in an exceptional way. In making the newspaper under his control thoroughly alive and useful, he had occasion to criticise the penal and reformatory institutions in Maine, and expose their lax and inefficient management, under an antiquated system which needed reform. As he never spoke without entire command of the facts and justice upon his side, this well-sustained attack compelled attention by the authorities of the State, arousing, as it did, enlightened public opinion to some degree of excitement. The late Lot M. Morrill, who was then Governor, took an adroit, and, as it turned out, very beneficial method of silencing the damaging fire of criticism. As if to say, "You seem to know more of this than we do," he threw the responsibility upon the young

editor himself, by appointing him a Commissioner to examine the prisons and reformatories of Maine and other States, and suggest what improvements were needed in the former. Mr. Blaine accepted the important trust, and entered upon it in a manner worthy of himself. He traveled through fifteen of the commonwealths of the Union, closely observing their methods of dealing with the vicious, and made an elaborate report, embracing many recommendations founded upon his keen, practical judgment. These were largely adopted and enforced. As a result, the institutions he had denounced were put upon a sound and paying basis, upon which they have ever since remained.

It was in 1858 that Mr. Blaine was sent to the Legislature, where he was to pass a four years' apprenticeship in the science of legislation in the stirring period just before and including the outbreak of the war. After service on important committees, he was twice elected Speaker of the lower House. Even at this comparatively early age, a little more than completing his third decade, he showed his genius for Parliamentary law and procedure, and his tact in the management of a deliberative assembly. Fortunate, indeed, must have been the legislature which enjoyed the services of James G. Blaine as presiding officer. The fame of his short career in this capacity is still affectionately preserved in the State, and spoken of as a standard of comparison which his

successors may hope to approach but not to equal.

It came quite naturally that in 1862 he should emerge into the wider field of the Federal Congress. The full gravity of "storm and stress" epoch of the great Rebellion began to be fully appreciated, and the States were sending up their strongest men to the National Councils to grapple with the problems of armament, defense, the sustaining of the nation's credit and the other emergencies of vast and unexpected civil war. General Garfield was recalled from the glorious front of battle, sorely against his will, to bear a more arduous duty in meeting the secret foes of the Union in the halls of the Capitol. Thaddeus Stevens, John A. Bingham, Boutwell, Conkling, Julian, Hayes, and others who were afterwards to play more noted, but sometimes less noble parts, then mostly in the first flush of their strength and manhood, and united by generous enthusiasm in one great cause, were there. The election of Mr. Blaine could not be otherwise than gratifying to his friend, President Lincoln, who leaned upon him almost implicitly, in regard to the political movement and sentiments in the far Northern Pine-Tree State, which was furnishing, without stint, her means and the strength of her stalwart sons by land and sea to the defense of the Union.

During his first year in Congress and part of

the second, Mr. Blaine devoted himself entirely to close observation of the occurrences which passed before him. The casual spectator would have seen at his desk only a young man of somewhat notable appearance, his dark hair and beard still unsnowed by time and care, with hawk-like glance following every detail of the public business, and in other respects, simply loyal to the lead of the eminent men on his side of the House, who soon came to know and rely upon him, if they had not previously done so.

About this time ensued an episode which may be mentioned not for its intrinsic importance, but because malicious tongues have dwelt upon it, and because there is nothing which needs to be covered up or slurred over in the life of the Republican candidate. Congress passed a conscription law, for which Mr. Blaine voted, and in which there was singularly enough, no exemption of Senators and Representatives from the draft. His name went into the box with the rest in his district, and was one of the first to be drawn. What was he to do? The brilliant orator and statesman, whose organizing powers were so much needed in the civil contests at home, would have been sadly and absurdly lost to the cause, tramping through the far South with a musket over his shoulder. If he used his influence to secure a commission, as he might easily have done, a raw and inexperienced officer would have displaced

some one better fitted for military command. Mr. Blaine's abundant courage needed no proof then or at any time afterward. Instead of pleading any exemption, he saw that a recruit was secured with his own means to fill the place in the quota of Maine, and continued the legislative work to which his country had given him a prior call.

When re-elected to the Thirty-ninth Congress, Mr. Blaine laid aside by degrees his role of reserve and observation, and moved up to the position to which his wonderful gifts entitled him. He was still a young man, but with sagacity and indeed experience far beyond most of his elders in years. He, as before said, was the trusted friend of the President, in whose second candidacy and election, as in his first, he materially aided. The gradual withdrawal of the elder men, either by death or by promotion to the Senate, gave the young blood in the House a chance to assert itself without ungraciousness, and it was by normal growth, and not by usurpation or audacity, that Mr. Blaine found himself before the end of his third term regarded as the leader of the majority. When the Forty-first Congress met, the choice fell upon him, by common consent, for the important post of the Speakership, and he advanced to the place to which nearly all his preparation had tended,

The fame of his six years' service in this exalted station is the world's property. It was not a chair

of roses, or at least the roses were thickly set with thorns. It is a fierce light which beats upon the Speaker's dais, and Mr. Blaine was too fearless and positive a man not to meet all the responsibilities of his post to the utmost. He held the balance with a firm hand between his own party, accustomed to power since the war and impatient of check, and a growing and turbulent minority, led by able men, and reckless in both legitimate and illegitimate opposition. One day the Speaker would be assailed by that lawless guerilla, "Ben." Butler, then posing as a Radical of the Radicals; the next day, or for a number of days, the Democrats would be "fillibustering" by tactics of delay against some measure obnoxious to them, under the leadership of Mr. Randall, Mr. Cox and others, masters of all the arts of irritation and bedevilment, of an adversary.

Mr. Blaine's sheer endurance in this as in many other crises was something to attract admiration and surprise. He always appeared in the Speaker's chair fresh, alert and even smiling; his voice never broke, nor did his hand falter, with all the strain to which he was subjected; and after remaining in his place for hours and hours, until the members upon the floor, though relieving each other often, and using all possible means to keep up strength, were hoarse and exhausted with fatigue, he would stroll home with his usual interest in the sights and sounds

around him, take some very light refreshment, and proceed to make up his arrears of sleep. It may here be recorded, that during Mr. Blaine's whole service of six years as Speaker, he was never absent a day from his post.

The same trait was afterward visible in the extraordinary forty-eight hours' session in which the Senate, regardless of its usual steady habits and the age of many of its members, once indulged during his term there. He stayed the proceedings through, and after this long vigil, when his brother Senators emerged broken down either by their arduous efforts in debate or other causes, he moved off with almost boyish lightness, conversing interestedly with friends.

This endurance is not merely the gift of nature, the result of his grand physique. Mr. Blaine has considered it a part of his duty in public life to keep himself up to the maximum of efficiency, to offer to his constituents and the country only the efforts of a sound mind in a sound body. With this object he has not merely refrained from damaging excess, which indeed would be repellent to him, but he attends to those details of hygiene and exercise, which great men are prone to consider beneath them, training himself, as it were, like an athlete to run the race or bear the burdens imposed upon him. It may be noticed, in studying his career, that he has probably lost less

time by sickness or debility than any public man that can be mentioned.

His temperance may be referred to in the same connection. He never took a drink of the so-called "hard liquors," whisky, brandy, or other spirits in his life, and probably does not know the taste of them. He is unaffectedly simple in his habits, in food as in dress, and, without making a parade of rule and system, works, sleeps and recreates, when not interrupted by some demand that it would be wrong to neglect, with the regularity of a day-laborer or a monk. This may not wholly please those who think that great powers should always be accompanied with a kind of wild license or excess, and that a man of affairs should be exempted from all the restraints of common and well-ordered lives; but sensible people will not be apt to think less of Mr. Blaine on account of these habits.

He displayed, of course, qualities higher than endurance in the Speaker's chair. His wisdom and honesty in keeping clear of the temporary madness of the "salary grab bill," when so many reputable men seemed to be thrown off their balance by the prospect of a few thousand dollars back pay more than that to which they were entitled, may be cited as an instance. It will be remembered that on the 1st of March, 1873, the bill was before the House increasing the salary of the President to $50,000, the Justices of the

Supreme Court, Vice President, Speaker and members of the Cabinet to $10,000; and members of Congress to $6,500, with the proviso that the increase should begin with the other officers on the 4th of March, 1873, but with Senators and Representatives from the beginning of the existing Congress. Mr. Blaine readily detected the bearing of the measure. He called the attention of the House to the fact that upon the last previous increase of salaries, that of the Speaker was adjusted on the same plan as that of the Vice President and members of the Cabinet. He thought that adjustment should not be disturbed, and he therefore asked unanimous consent to insert the word "hereafter" in reference to the Speaker's pay.

Mr. Randall objected, and Mr. S. S. Cox remarked, "That saves the reputation of the House."

Mr. Blaine was of no mind to shoulder any part of the odium he saw the House was incurring. He earnestly appealed to Mr. Randall to withdraw the objection, and, as it was scarcely courteous to thrust upon an officer money which he insisted on declining, Mr. Randall consented. The Speaker promptly interlined the saving word. Awaking to the virtual repudiation thus made of the House's action, Mr. Farnsworth hastily interposed another objection, but too late. The Speaker ruled him out of order, and, having thus cut himself clear

of it without showing any open disrespect to the House or his party associates, put the bill to a vote. The effect which its adoption produced upon public opinion need not be here detailed.

CHAPTER III.

PERSONAL TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS.

THIS seems an appropriate place to speak of some of those elements of character which have given Mr. Blaine a general popularity very rare in the case of one so aggressive and so devoted to principle.

One of these traits for which he has not been generally credited, though one of the most attractive, is his keen humor. It would be strange if a man of such wide and varied gifts lacked this one in his make-up, but Mr. Blaine has always kept his nimble wit in such subjection to his more solid qualities that he has wholly escaped the dangerous reputation of the jester, and in public life only the lambent play of a sarcasm, as fleet as lightning, gives token of an almost steady illumination that is reserved for the amenities of private life.

Intimacy with Mr. Blaine would well repay a Boswell or a gleaner of table-talk, but his published speeches and debates would have to be carefully searched for the quick flashes of merriment which discomfited a troublesome adversary, or established the orator's position triumphantly,

and then they would suffer by being detached from the context and the occasion. Mr. Blaine's characteristic readiness and decision of speech are well exhibited in all of them.

He has a fund of quaint anecdotes, almost equal to that of President Lincoln himself, which he can tell with inimitable effect, or use briefly to clinch an argument or illustrate a point.

In a debate with Senator Thurman over the troublesome question of the debt of the Pacific Railroads, Mr. Blaine remarked: "The Senator says that if they would agree to pay $10,000,000 a year he would not make a conclusive bargain as respects the debt. It does seem to me, with entire respect for the Senator, that he has seemed to place himself in the position of the man in the story who was so contrary that he would not allow himself to do as he had a mind to."

And further on he drew the additional parallel: "If we let go this company on their simply paying their honest debts, we will be as bad as the young man in London who succeeded to his father's chancery practice, and when the father asked the son about the famous case of Smith *vs.* Jones, the son said, 'I settled that yesterday amicably and fairly to both parties.' 'Oh! you young blockhead,' said he, 'I have lived on that suit for the last twenty years.'"

His command of general literature is equally complete. In one of the lively verbal duels with

which he disturbed the dullness of the Senate, he remarked to Mr. Eaton, of Connecticut:

"I have read a great deal from the Senator this morning, and I will read more before I get through."

Mr. Eaton. Perhaps that will be the best part of your speech, except what you read from Webster.

Mr. Blaine. I am obliged to the Senator for the exception. It is equal to Dogberry's injunction, "Put God first."

The same debate (in May, 1879) was marked by his great oratorical conflict with the late Senator Hill, of Georgia, which with the substitution of more rapid modern methods for the stately formality of old times, may be compared to the test of strength between Webster and Hayne. Passing over for a moment the more serious passages, it will be remembered that Senator Hill had written to the voters of Troup county when elected to the Secession Convention, "I will consent to the dissolution of the Union as I would consent to the death of my father, never from choice, only from necessity, and then in sorrow and sadness of heart."

Mr. Blaine read the ordinance of secession adopted by the Convention, and then continued, amidst the uncontrollable laughter of even those who were hit hardest:

"That was the ordinance which the Senator from

Georgia said to the people of Troup he would consent to as he would to the death of his father, and the ordinance which the evening after it was passed so filled his heart with sadness that he put out the lights in his room and would not make a speech to a crowd outside serenading him. I have read the yeas and nays on that, and what is my unbounded surprise to find that the Senator from Georgia himself voted for the ordinance. Here he is, 'Hill, of Troup.' On the call of the yeas and nays there were 208 in favor of the ordinance of secession and 89 against it, and in the 89 were Alexander H. Stephens and Herschel V. Johnson, who had that very year run for Vice-President on the Douglass ticket. The Senator from Georgia [Mr. Hill], who would consent to it just as he would the death of his father, made up his mind that if two hundred and eight men wanted to murder the old man he would join with them. [Great laughter and applause.] Rather than be in a minority he would join the murderous crowd [laughter], and be a parricide."

Immediately afterward occurred a tart personal passage, which further proved Mr. Blaine's perfect coolness and readiness, and is also important as being his own account of an event which is sometimes unfairly used to his discredit, although any public man had a perfect right, at the time referred to, to decide for himself, and upon the advice of trusted friends (as did General Garfield), whether

his services were most needed in the field or in the forum. Soldiers were many; experienced and trustworthy statesmen and legislators were few, and it is no possible reflection upon Mr. Blaine's courage that he followed the duty which seemed nearest to hand, and waived the military glory won by many far less worthy. In a tone of good-humored raillery he remarked that the Senators on the other side of the Chamber were "dragged into secession" because "their States went, and the honorable Senator from Kentucky [Mr. Williams] was dragged into it because his State did not go."

"I did not hire a substitute," was Mr. Williams' courteous retort, and the report continues thus:

MR. BLAINE. He says he did not hire a substitute. That is a piece of wit which I am glad to notice. The Senators from Kentucky have twice, both of them, taken a turn when I was on the floor to say they did not hire a substitute, as if that was something very pungent. In the conscription law, passed by a Congress of which I was a member, for the first time in the history of the Government there was no exemption of Senators or Representatives from the draft. I was a younger man then than I am now, and among the very first men drafted in my district I was one. I did not resign my seat in Congress. I did send a substitute. What would the honorable Senator have done?

MR. WILLIAMS. I should have gone.

MR. BLAINE. You would have gone?

MR. WILLIAMS. I would have gone to the fight.

MR. BLAINE. I am glad you would have gone in

any way on the Union side. But the Senator was not drafted, and he went and fought against the Government, even when his State did not secede. I consider this reference to a substitute as a first-class sarcasm; and as the Senators from Kentucky have each tried their hands on it only twice, I hope they will repeat it again.

MR. WILLIAMS. When my country calls for my services in the army, I am ready.

MR. BLAINE. I am not disputing it. I only say the honorable Senator went into the rebellion because his State did not go.

MR. WILLIAMS. I should like to ask the Senator did his substitute fight?

MR. BLAINE. No. I found out afterward that he was a Democrat. [Laughter.] I was inveigled into hiring him without knowing who he was.

MR. EATON. Did he sell himself for half price?

MR. BLAINE. I do not know. I paid full price for him, more than an average Democrat was worth in the war. [Great laughter.]

Passing to more elevated traits, Mr. Blaine's undoubted courage in his convictions requires a a word of praise. It is this which makes his career and his place in the affections of so many the more remarkable. He is no trimmer. No one is in doubt where to find him on many of the questions of the day. After experience with the wavering, non-committal and uncertain politicians, it is refreshing to find one public man who speaks his mind freely and unmistakably, and adheres to what he has said. Mr. Blaine's views on com-

merce, the tariff, finance and the other questions before the public are as familiar as his own world-famous name. He does not deal in vague generalities, or refrain from action on any subject of importance because his interests may conflict with his duty. It is evident that this quality is appreciated by his countrymen. They prefer a leader who expresses all his intentions, even though they may not perfectly coincide with all of them, over one who would keep his supporters in the dark as to his real purposes and ideas as long and as largely as possible.

A special display of this unfailing courage, the need and utility of which was perhaps not fully understood by all at the time it occurred, was given by Mr. Blaine in the House of Representatives, and afterward in the Senate, during the years that followed the ascendency of the Democrats throughout the South, and consequently in the lower branch of Congress. Some of his opponents have criticised his tactics while leader of the Republican minority, and afterward Senator from Maine, as uselessly irritating a "waving of the bloody shirt," a revival of war issues, and so on. Even his supporters may have wondered why there should be so much debate about Andersonville, Jeff. Davis and the solid South. But Mr. Blaine had a purpose. A Democratic majority saw itself almost in reach of the control of the White House and the Capitol for the first time

since the war. It was largely the old majority that had obtained before the war, unchanged and unrepentant. It expected once more to dominate the North by means of an intimidated negro vote, as it had before done by the slave-holders' vote. It was therefore imperative that some one should meet this pretension from the very start, and teach the ex-confederates that the day of Northern doughfaces had forever passed. Mr. Blaine fearlessly took up the gage, and for three or four years bore the brunt of the verbal battle which raged backward and forward, and which incidentally tore the masks from the faces of all secret sympathizers with rebellion or slavery, chastened their pride, and largely contributed to awake the North to the danger of this new kind of "slaveocracy" maintained by "bulldozing." Mr. Blaine was also fully up with the current topics of the time. He exposed, with inimitable satire, the pretence that the South was suffering from "bayonets at the polls," when there were, as he showed, only eleven hundred and fifty-five Federal soldiers in the whole region, less than one for each county, or one for each seven hundred square miles. He denounced the violent course of refusing appropriations for the whole army unless the election laws were repealed. He showed, with his usual clearness and masterly presentation of figures, that the white voters of the South really returned twice as many representatives in proportion to

their own number as the white voters of the North did, and that thus alone the Democratic majority was obtained in Congress. The necessity for this painful struggle has passed away; but it had to come at the time it did, and Mr. Blaine was there to meet it. The South is now sending up a new class of men, intent more upon the future than the past, and the real progress of that section has no more earnest friend and helper than Mr. Blaine.

Above all, but most indescribable, is Mr. Blaine's gracious and winning personality, which captivates even those who would be his enemies. He was afterward on friendly terms with those to whom he dealt the keenest blows in the hot debates of 1876–79. The wounds then inflicted did not rankle, for Mr. Blaine was scrupulous in confining himself only to the public acts and records of his adversaries, and was always within parliamentary courtesies.

There are contrasts in Mr. Blaine which might not be suspected by those with a merely surface knowledge of his character, but which are essential to a study of the man. Thus he produces upon many the impression of being entirely off-hand and dashing in his methods, one whom it would be almost impossible to tie down to the drudgery of exact observation and the collation of facts. Even his friends are apt to imagine that his triumphs are due to flashes of intuition, and that it is recklessness and luck which carry

him through so many difficult positions without loss of *prestige* or the perpetration of damaging blunders.

In reality there are few, even among the patient plodders or professed book-worms, so careful and thorough in preparation as he. Though this work is generally done by him with the same rapidity and energy as his more public efforts, it is unsparing in its intensity while it lasts, as may be judged from the results. Who, during his long career in Congress, has caught him erring or misrepresenting in his statements about men and events? Almost every word of his has been closely scanned by hostile eyes, anxious to detect and publish any flaw; he has had occasion to make assertions sure to provoke controversy and attempted denial. Yet in the few instances when adversaries have ventured to take issue with him, he has been so well possessed not merely of the truth, but of the proofs of it, that, while never pretending to superhuman infallibility, he has been able to overthrow them completely on all substantial points involved.

The same observations apply to his literary tasks. Those near him during the preparation of "Twenty Years of Congress," can testify that he was as keen in the hunt for even the smallest fact which was to have place in the narrative, as if the success of the whole turned upon it. Time and again men of less conscientious thoroughness

would have been tempted to discard some obscure detail as not worth clearing up, or to state it with a guess at the truth; but not so Mr. Blaine. If the missing fact was to be run to earth anywhere within the limits of the Government archives or the memory of the living he would not let it escape him. The first volume, covering a period of intense feeling and much dispute, has been before the public for months. Not one of its critics has thought of impugning its accuracy.

His great services to the Republican party in Maine spoke of the same characteristic. For twenty years he was chairman of the Republican State Committee, and "organized victory" in a succession of notable campaigns. It was only during the latter part of the time that he emerged as the eloquent, "magnetic" leader; he was never a "Boss" in the sense of those who have dominated politics in some States and cities. His success was due to hard, unremitting work in the committee-rooms, and in canvassing every county. It is said that he had full lists of the electors, with their probable standing indicated, before each campaign, and that he could therefore predict, with almost absolute accuracy, the results of the voting.

There is a lesson in all this which would make it useful to repeat, even were it not needed to correct a misapprehension about Mr. Blaine's methods. There are men of less acquirements

who would find it well to imitate his patient toil in the seclusion of the study, before essaying showy feats in public life.

Another contrast is that between his hearty, free and open manner at all times when it is proper to unbend,—familiar with friends, winning to strangers, disarming even to enemies,—and the dignity which no man assumes with more grace in ceremonials of state, or when required to repel impertinence. It is safe to say that the boldest of his intimates never felt tempted to presume upon his acquaintance with Mr. Blaine. Without any oppressive stateliness, there is about him an impression of solid worth and power that somehow silences the rude jest, checks too close approach and inspires respect. In private, he is the most unaffected of men, cheerful, companionable, and one with those about him; in public, his bearing is always fitted to the duty he has to perform and the station which he may fill.

It is certain that nothing could be more distasteful to Mr. Blaine than the idea of dragging private religious belief, as an argument *pro* or *con*, into the heated discussion of a political campaign. He would oppose the use of any reference to religion to bring voters to his standard, and he has ever refrained from appealing to any sectarian prejudice against an adversary. But, as it is said elsewhere, there is nothing in his politics, religion or daily life, the Republican candidate desires to con-

ceal, or which needs to be explained away. The facts of Mr. Blaine's history on the religious side are largely a matter of record, and they may be simply stated thus :

As the daughter of an old and respected Roman Catholic family, his mother was naturally a sincere and life-long member of that body, and honored it by her life as a devout Christian woman. Her son has said, in a letter often republished, that nothing would induce him to utter a word against his mother's faith, and he will never permit himself to be drawn into one of those religious controversies which generally do so little good and so much harm.

Following the liberty of conscience which prevails in this favored land, Mr. Blaine followed in the footsteps of his Protestant ancestors, and has been for nearly twenty-eight years a member of the Congregational Church, having been confirmed in the city of Augusta, in the edifice where the same rite has since been performed for all his six children. He has given liberally of his means for church purposes, as the records of the congregations both of Washington and in Augusta will indicate to those curious enough to make the inquiries.

When at the National Capital, and almost overwhelmed with work and care, he may have sometimes been pardonably absent from the sanctuary; but his pastor at Augusta bears witness, as many

others might do, that church-going is to him a sacred obligation, and that he and his family, and the stranger within his gates, unless for grave cause preventing, are to be found each Lord's Day filling their accustomed pew and joining in the services. Earnestness without parade or bigotry may well be given as a description of Mr. Blaine's religious life.

The Yorktown Centennial afforded, perhaps, the only interlude in Mr. Blaine's arduous and sombre experience as Secretary of State. Although perplexing at the time, there was an element of humor in the careful handling necessary of the susceptibilities of the German and French guests on that occasion. The descendants of Lafayette and of Steuben showed no such tendency to coalesce in the glory of a common cause as did their ancestors a hundred years before. It may be said to their credit that their pride did not seem to be personal, but national; yet the effect was the same, so long as they were to be treated as representatives of their nations. If the slightest honor was shown to the flag of one country which was not instantly shown to the other; if a polite attention was extended to one party which was not balanced by something equivalent for the other; if the two groups were even brought in too close proximity, there was haughty sniffing and bridling which threatened the dreadful scandal of one or both sets of guests going off in the midst of the enter-

tainment. Mr. Blaine was the very man to have charge in such an emergency, but his patience, as well as his adroitness, were sometimes thoroughly tried. The French, doubtless, considered themselves entitled to the greater share of hereditary gratitude and recognition, but the Germans were quite as determined that the French should not get it, and the stiffness of Prussian military etiquette (they were all officers) made it the more easy to offend them. The cordial manner of the Secretary of State smoothed over many difficulties, and the guests of the nation all departed in pleasant mood.

One of the flying anecdotes of the time is, perhaps, worthy of preservation. At a dinner given by Mr. Blaine at his temporary place of residence at Yorktown to the President, and other of the most distinguished persons in attendance, Mr. Arthur, in the course of the conversation, remarked that the next Centennial celebration upon that spot would be a still more imposing event, "And who knows," he said, turning to Mr. Blaine, "that a grandson of yours may not then be President of the United States?" Whereupon, Senator Anthony, who sat by, observed, with a suspicion of slyness, that "he had understood the family, and the country were not willing to wait quite that long."

CHAPTER IV.

WARM-HEARTED AND BELOVED.

The attachment of Mr. Blaine to his birthplace is so strong and so unusual, that the inference is clear that his childhood must have been a happy one. No place will ever hold the same interest in his affection as Washington County, Pennsylvania. He remembers, with fondness, every running brook, every tree, every stone, every tradition, every incident connected with its history, and every name numbered in its citizenship, for the last hundred years. He recalls, with peculiar tenderness, his early boyhood there, his old teachers, his old school fellows. This feeling is one which seems to be a characteristic of natures which are at once capacious and ardent. It was strongly developed in Webster, and in many of the greatest statesmen of this and other lands.

It is something quite distinct from mere state pride, admirable as that also is when kept within due bounds. It does not depend upon artificial constitutions or institutions, but is an attachment to one's native soil and locality as such. It is undoubtedly the natural foundation of that intense *national* patriotism, which is so marked an element

in Mr. Blaine's character, that it has attracted the attention and provoked the criticism of English journals, which deprecate his election to the Presidency, upon the ground that he is too thoroughly "American." The criticism is one which will not injure Mr. Blaine with the people of the United States, native or adopted. Against these passing cavils, born of selfish desires and fears, we may well set the philosophic words of a great English writer, who tells us that, "Whatever strengthens our local attachments, is favorable both to individual and national character. Our home, our birthplace, our native land—think for a while what the virtues are which arise out of the feelings connected with these words, and, if you have any intellectual eyes, you will then perceive the connection between topography and patriotism."

Mr. Blaine's love for his birth-place is shown by the following letter, which he wrote a few days before the death of President Garfield, and which illustrates his mastery of that graceful and eloquent style, in which he easily excels all other public men of this generation.

"WASHINGTON, D. C., Sept. 5, 1881.

"*To John McKennan, Esq., Washington, Pa.,*

"DEAR SIR:—I had anticipated great pleasure in being present at the centennial celebration of the erection of Washington County, but the national sorrow which shadows every household detains me here. I shall, perhaps, never again have the opportunity of seeing so many of

my blood and kindred, and you may well conceive that my disappointment is great. The strong attachment which I feel for the county, the pride which I cherish in its traditions, and the high estimate which I have always placed on the character of its people, increase with years and reflection. The pioneers were strong-hearted, God-fearing, resolute men, wholly, or almost wholly, of Scotch or Scotch-Irish descent. They were men, who, according to an inherited maxim, never turned their backs upon a friend or an enemy.

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"It would be impossible to overestimate the beneficent and wide-spread influence which Washington and Jefferson College have exerted on the civilization of that great country between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi river. Their graduates have been prominent in the pulpit, at the bar, on the bench and in the high stations of public life. During my service of eighteen years in Congress, I have met a larger number of the alumni of Washington and Jefferson than of any other single college in the United States. I make this statement from memory, but I feel assured that a close examination of the rolls of the two houses from 1863 to 1881 would fully establish its correctness. It was inevitable that a county thus peopled should grow in strength, wisdom and wealth. Its 60,000 inhabitants are favored far beyond the average lot of man.

"They are blessed with a fertile soil, and with the health-giving climate which belongs to the charmed latitude of the 40th parallel, the middle of the wheat and corn belt of the country. Beyond this, they enjoy the happy and ennobling influences of scenery as grand and as beautiful as that which lures tourists thousands of miles beyond the sea. I have myself visited many of the celebrated

BURIAL PLACE OF BLAINE'S PARENTS AT BROWNSVILLE, PA.,
WITH MONUMENT ERECTED BY HIMSELF.

spots in Europe, and in America, and I have nowhere witnessed a more attractive sight than was familiar to my eyes in boyhood from the old Indian Hill Farm, where I was born, and where my great grandfather, the elder Neal Gillespie, settled before the outbreak of the Revolution. The majestic sweep of the Monongahela through the foot hills of the Alleghenies, with the chain of mountains but twenty miles distant in full view, gave an impression of beauty and sublimity which can never be effaced.

"I talk thus familiarly of the localities and of childhood incidents because your assemblage, though composed of thousands, will, in effect, be a family reunion, where the only thing in order will be tradition and recollection and personal history. Identified as I have been for twenty-eight years with the great and noble people of another section of the Union. I have never lost any of my attachment for my native county and my native state. Wherever I may be in life or whatever my fortunes, the county of Washington, as it anciently was, taking in both sides of the Monongahela, will be sacred in my memory. I shall always recall with pride that my ancestry and kindred were and are not inconspicuously connected with its history, and that on either side of the beautiful river, in the Protestant and in the Catholic cemeteries, five generations of my own blood sleep in honored graves.

"Very sincerely yours,

"JAMES G. BLAINE."

He enjoyed great popularity in Washington County, even as a youth, and to-day he is not forgotten, but is remembered and beloved by all the old residents. The same popularity has followed him wherever he has gone; his college mates

remember him first of all their associates. As a tutor in Kentucky, his pupils have never forgotten him nor lost their old time liking and admiration for him. Among those who knew him at the Institution for the Blind in Philadelphia the same high regard exists. In Maine, where he has lived for over thirty years, within a square of the picturesque old State House, not one person has declared his unfriendliness to the great friend of the people. His neighbors, from the youngest to the oldest, are his best friends, and no man in the beautiful city of Augusta is more popular or more respected. His standing at home is therefore all that can be desired. Rufus Choate once said, "Ask what his friends, neighbors and townsmen think of him, if you want to know what the man really is." Judged by this standard, Mr. Blaine has nothing to fear.

An old citizen of Augusta says that Mr. Blaine's life as a man has been identified with the people of Maine. "We have known him," said he, "in every relation of life, closely and intimately, through all these years, and in every way, we say in the presence of his daily associates, Mr. Blaine has had a spotless career. As husband, father, neighbor, citizen, business man, every one in this community, without regard to party lines, will give him unstinted praise; in personal morals, in habits of temperance, in uprightness in business, and in devotion to extraordinary as well as

ordinary duties, Mr. Blaine is a pattern man. He has been fortunate in life, but his good fortune has been the result of good habits and good sense, and he has been so generous, not only with money, but with time and sympathy, that envy and jealousy have not followed him. He has an elegant, refined, Christian home, open to every demand of hospitality; and there is not a poor man in the town who hesitates to enter it for relief, or who goes away empty-handed.

"Mr. Blaine has always been a model of honor and uprightness in his financial dealings. His word is as good as his bond, and no debt was ever unpaid, or grudgingly paid, or evaded by him. This whole community will absolutely testify to his liberality, and bear witness how wisely and constantly he has given to all good and worthy objects.

"Men may be tempted by the necessities of a desperate political campaign to resort to 'mud-throwing' to assail Mr. Blaine's character, but against all such efforts we present a man who has the universal respect and attachment of neighbors who have known him throughout his whole career, and know that he has been a centre of good and not of evil all his life; a man who has a State behind him of absolute unanimity, and who has to-day a more devoted and enthusiastic personal following than any other man in the United States."

As an example of Mr. Blaine's sympathy and generosity, an incident coming within the observation of the writer may be noticed. A young journalist, who had been friendly to Mr. Blaine, or at least not prejudiced against him, was lying very ill at his residence in Washington. His expenses were heavy, and his income was wholly cut off. Another journalist told Mr. Blaine of the condition of the sick man and his family. Mr. Blaine, then Speaker, was about to open the day's session of the House. When he heard the story, he said, "Wait a moment," and went to his official desk. The usual morning prayer was said, and then, while the Journal of the previous day's session was being read, Mr. Blaine called a member to the chair and joined his newspaper friend in the Speaker's lobby.

"Come with me," said he; and, going directly to the office of the Sergeant-at-Arms, he drew one hundred dollars in bills, and, handing them to the gentleman, said, "If you get a chance to give this to his family without wounding their pride or subjecting them to obligation, do so, only do not let my name be mentioned." It so happened that the money was not needed, but the kindly disposition of the man was thus illustrated. And this is only one instance among the almost numberless cases where his purse has been opened wherever its contents could relieve distress or misery, or serve some good cause.

The following remarks of the Rev. Dr. Ecob, now in charge of a large congregation in Albany, N. Y., are appropriate in this connection. No truer, better man than he ever entered a pulpit.

"I have known Mr. Blaine," says this gentleman, "since 1872. During nearly ten years of this time I was pastor of the church in Augusta of which Mr. and Mrs. Blaine are members. The satisfaction I take in his nomination is based upon such a knowledge of him as only a pastor can gain. I believe that I am too true a Republican, and I know that my conception of citizenship is too high, to permit me to ratify the exaltation of any man whose character has not the true ring. I have been very near to Mr. Blaine, not only in the most trying political crises, but in the sharper trial of great grief in the household, and have never yet detected a false note. I would not be understood as avowing too much for human nature. I mean that as I have known him he has stood loyally by his convictions; that his word has always had back of it a clear purpose, and that purpose has always been worthy of the highest manhood.

"In his house he was always the soul of geniality and good heart. It was always summer in that house whatever the Maine winter might be without. And not only his 'rich neighbors and kinsmen' welcomed him home, but a long line of the poor hailed the return of that family as a

special providence. In the church he is honored and beloved. The good old New England custom of church-going with all the guests is enforced strictly in the Blaine household. Whoever is under his roof, from the President down, is expected to be with the family at church. Fair weather or foul, those pews were always well filled. Not only his presence on the Sabbath, but his influence, his wise counsels, his purse, are freely devoted to the interest of the noble Old South Church of Augusta.

"The hold which Mr. Blaine has maintained upon the hearts of such great numbers of his countrymen is not sufficiently explained by brilliant gifts of magnetism; the secret lies in his generous, manly, Christian character. Those who have known him best are not surprised that his friends all over the country have been determined that he should secure the highest honor within their gift. It is because they believe in him. The office has sought the man, the political papers to the contrary notwithstanding. I have absolute knowledge that in 1880 he did not lift a finger to influence the Convention. He was quietly at home devoting himself to his business affairs, and steadfastly refused even the entreaties of his own family to interest himself in behalf of the nomination. I, for one, shall put my conscience into my vote next November."

CHAPTER V.

AN AMERICAN OF THE AMERICANS.

THERE is nothing which has more commended Mr. Blaine to the admiration and enthusiastic support of his fellow-countrymen, whether they were distinctly conscious of the quality in him or not, than the thoroughly native formation and fibre of his character. He is above all things an American. It is scarcely necessary to qualify this by saying that there is in him none of the narrowness of the so-called "Native American," or "Know Nothing," and none of that harmful excess of feeling to which the French, who afford perhaps the best specimens of it, have given the name of "Chauvinism." His sympathies, though first for his own nation, are also wide enough to embrace the whole "boundless continent," which he thinks ought to be "ours" by the peaceful conquest of mutual commerce and friendship, and every man is to him an American who gives his undivided faith and allegiance to the Constitution and the Union, and is ready to merge himself in the body of the American people. With only this proviso he is ready to espouse the cause of any citizen or class of citizens, wherever they may

have been born, or of whatever race, or whether dwelling in our own borders or traveling abroad.

The words which in his memorial address he applied to the lamented Garfield, with whom he had so many admirable qualities in common, might well be applied to the orator who spoke:

"Himself a conspicuous illustration of what ability and ambition may do under republican institutions, he loved his country with a passion of patriotic devotion, and every waking thought was given to her advancement. He was an American in all his aspirations, and he looked to the destiny and influence of the United States with the philosophic composure of Jefferson, and the demonstrative confidence of John Adams."

And again: "He believed that our continental relations, extensive and undeveloped as they are, involved responsibility, and could be cultivated into profitable friendship, or be abandoned to harmful indifference or lasting enmity. He believed, with equal confidence, that an essential forerunner to a new era of national progress must be a feeling of contentment in every section of the Union, and a generous belief that the benefits and burdens of government would be common to all."

This active patriotism in Mr. Blaine's character explains many features of his career. He is not one to be satisfied with making mere lip-professions of devotion, or even being ready to defend his country when attacked. He wishes at all

times to be doing something in her service, either to advance prosperity at home, or assert her proper position abroad, among the nations of the earth—two things which in this stage of the world's progress are indeed inseparable.

Thus, in 1878, he braved the odium which then attached to the very name of subsidy, and advocated the establishment and maintenance of a line of mail steamers to Brazil, to which the Emperor Dom Pedro lately returned, full of enthusiasm, from his visit to the United States, had already extended aid conditional upon that from the United States. He showed that by this very policy Great Britain had crowded the American sailor off the seas, and he appealed to Congress to right this wrong, saying:

"I maintain, Mr. President, that if the United States had not met with the incalculable obstacle that was thrown upon us by the war, and had been willing to uphold her shipping just as stiffly as Great Britain on all the lines of commerce, we should have outrun her. We had done it in sailing-vessels. We were ahead of her, or at least equal to her, in 1857. If I remember the figures aright, the tonnage stood about 5,700,000 tons for each country, and I grieve to say that it is eight million and odd for Great Britain, and only three million for America to-day. You may stand here and talk about the wrongfulness of subsidies, and the impolicy of granting them, until doomsday,

and Great Britain will applaud every speech of that kind made in the American Congress, and will quietly subsidize her steamers and take possession of the commerce of the world. Great Britain to-day makes more money out of the commerce of the United States, vastly more, than is the interest on our public debt. She handles more, in the way of net profits, on the commerce which America gives her, than the interest on the vast national debt which we are burdened with to-day. I make that statement as a statistical fact, capable of being illustrated and proved."

The aid was refused, and American trade is still cut off from Brazil, or goes only by way of Liverpool, in British steamers. Again, in 1881, he pleaded for the re-establishment of American shipping, opposing, at the same time, the proposition of Senator Beck to throw open our doors to the ship-builders of the Clyde. His watchword was still, "Everything American." He said:

"Mr. President, the frank admission of the honorable Senator from Kentucky took away a large part of the argument which I thought I should have to make, and that was to prove that if the United States to-day is incompetent to compete with Great Britain in the manufacture of iron ships, and if you admit iron ships from Great Britain absolutely free of duty, you will be still more incompetent to do it next year. It takes, in the language of the trade, what is called a great

'plant' to build steamships; it takes a large investment of money; it takes large and powerful machinery; it requires the investment of millions to start with; and if, in addition to all that has been done abroad to build up English ship-yards, we pour into them all the patronage that can come from this country, I should like the honorable Senator from Kentucky, or any other Senator, to tell me exactly at what point of time it will come to pass that any feeble effort on this side will begin to compete with those great yards. If you abandon it this year because you are unable, you will be far more unable next year, you will be still less able the year ensuing, and every year will add to the monopoly of British power in that respect, and to the absolute weakness and prostration of American power in competition. But I will say that the frank admission of the honorable Senator from Kentucky, of the future and perpetual dependence upon England removes the necessity of arguing that point. He frankly admits it with all its damaging force."

In 1879, Mr. Blaine said, in speaking of the expenses of the navy, which has no commerce to protect: "We carried five-sevenths of the American commerce when the war broke out. We do not carry one-quarter to-day, and if we come out of the deep abyss of humiliation that we are in, we will come out of it by vigorous and strong-nerved and daring legislation, if you please. I would

open it to all the business of the country, but I would put the race between American skill and the skill of all the world, with the utmost possible confidence that, sustained by this Government in the race, we would win. It is in our people. With an equal chance we can beat them. But, with the present condition of things, a hope for the revival of American commerce is as idle a hope as ever entered the brain of an insane man. Our trade is falling off one or two per cent. per annum as we stand to-day. It was less this year than it was last. It was less last year than it was the year before. It will be less next year than this.

* * * * *

"We want a navy, but we want something for it to do. We want a navy to protect the commerce, but we want a commerce in advance for the navy to protect, and we want a commerce that shall not be one of favoritism; a commerce that shall not benefit one section at the expense of another, but one that shall be equal and just and generous and profitable to all. You will never get it by making this nation a tributary to Great Britain. You will never get it by banishing the art of ship-building from among our people. You will never get it by discouraging all possible aspirations for maritime and commercial supremacy, by a public proclamation from Congress that after nearly a century of gallant struggle, in which more than three-quarters of the time we were

ahead in the race, on account of an accidental mishap that put us behind, we of to-day, not having the nerve or the sagacity of those who went before us, sank before the prospect, and asked other nations to do for us what we have lost the manhood and the energy to do for ourselves."

There is nothing of the spread-eagle in this. It is the langauge of a statesman who wishes practically to benefit his country, who is not only proud of her resources, but wishes to see them developed, and who knows that a great people should not remain supine in the race for peaceful supremacy on the globe.

In the same way he appealed to a proper national pride, when, in 1878, as a friend of bi-metallic currency, he withstood not only the advocates of the single gold standard but those of the unlimited coinage of the depreciated dollar, and urged the coinage of a silver dollar of equal value with that of gold. He showed that it would not only tend to restore silver for international exchanges, but that it would "insure to our laborers at home a full dollar's pay for a dollar's worth of work," a matter always of deep concern to him. On this point he further said:

"And I think we owe this to the American laborer. Ever since we demonetized the old dollar we have been running our mints at full speed, coining a new silver dollar for the use of the Chinese coolie and the Indian pariah—a dol-

lar containing 420 grains of standard silver, with its superiority over our ancient dollar ostentatiously engraved on its reverse side. To these 'outside barbarians' we send this superior dollar, bearing all our national emblems, our patriotic devices, our pious inscriptions, our goddess of liberty, our defiant eagle, our federal unity, our trust in God. This dollar contains 7½ grains more silver than the famous 'dollar of the fathers' proposed to be recoined by the pending bill, and more than four times as many of these new dollars have already been coined as ever were coined of all other silver dollars in the United States. In the exceptional and abnormal condition of the silver market now existing throughout the world, we have felt compelled to increase the weight of the dollar with which we carry on trade with the heathen nations of Asia. And shall we do less for the American laborer at home? Nay, shall we not do a little better and a little more for those of our own blood and our own friends? If you remonetize the dollar of the fathers, your mints will be at once put to work on two different dollars; different in weight, different in value, different in prestige, different in their reputation and currency throughout the commercial world. It will read strangely in history that the weightier and more valuable of these dollars is made for an ignorant class of heathen laborers in China and India, and that the lighter and less valuable is

made for the intelligent and educated laboring man who is a citizen of the United States. Charity, the adage says, begins at home. Charity, the independent American laborer scorns to ask, but he has the right to demand that justice should begin at home. And in his name, and in the name of common sense and common honesty, I ask that the American Congress will not force upon the American laborer an inferior dollar, which the naked and famishing and degraded laborers of India and China refuse to accept."

CHAPTER VI.

A FRIEND OF LABOR AND ENTERPRISE.

Mr. Blaine's sympathy goes naturally, and has always gone, to the workingman. He comes from a place and from among a people where honest labor is considered a badge of honor, and where the maxim, "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat," is thoroughly believed in. He has himself spent a life of constant exertion, either in public or private employ, and none of the pains or the pleasures of such a life are unknown to him. The phrase "workingman's friend" has been so abused by demagogues that Mr. Blaine has never put forward a claim to it, or paraded himself in that character; but his adherence to the cause has been steady and unostentatious. He has, in fact, felt himself one with the toiling millions, and has spoken as one of them, as it were in his own behalf as well as theirs, and never as if condescending from any height above them.

The result has been a ready and cordial sympathy between himself and those of his fellow-citizens who eat their bread in the sweat of their face, earning a livelihood with active brain, or

deft fingers, or strong arms. He has a lively and profound interest in all that pertains to them, whether they be those who swing the sledge and axe, or drive the plane, or delve in the mine, or control with skill and courage the powerful agencies of steam.

His constant effort has been to aid the development of American industry, not only by maintaining the duties on imports, which protect the American manufacturer and mechanic against ruinous competition from abroad, and have thereby added so much to the accumulated wealth and resources of the country, but also by opening new fields for enterprise in the direction of ship-building, the ocean-carrying trade, and commerce with countries which need our products.

His plans and policy all tend toward improving the condition of the laborer and artisan, toward preserving to him the home market, which is so rapidly increasing by the growth of population, and at the same time adding a foreign one by developing trade relations with our sister republics in this hemisphere, the countries of Asia and Africa, which are now too much monopolized by Europe, and even with Europe itself, where American ingenuity, if once fully appreciated, would find a welcome.

This ready and warm-hearted sympathy with the wage-earner has been displayed in many ways by Mr. Blaine. When the question of the cur-

rency was before Congress, under exciting circumstances, in 1876, Mr. Blaine (whose record in this particular is clear) took the side of honest money as opposed to wild inflation. What was the reason which he put foremost for this action? It was that the interests of the workingman would be injuriously affected by the opposite course. In his speech before the House of Representatives, February 10th, 1876, Mr. Blaine explained, with equal vigor and clearness, the effect which would be produced by perpetuating an irredeemable paper currency, and distinguished this from the effects produced by its original issue during the war. He said:

"Uncertainty as to the value of the currency from day to day is injurious to all honest industry. And while that which is known as the debtor interest should be fairly and generously considered in the shaping of measures for specie resumption, there is no justice in asking for inflation on its behalf. Rather there is the gravest injustice; for you must remember that there is a large class of most deserving persons who would be continually and remorselessly robbed by such a policy. I mean the *Labor* of the country, that is compelled to live from and by its daily earnings. The savings-banks, which represent the surplus owned by the laborers of the nation, have deposits to-day exceeding eleven hundred millions of dollars—more than the entire capital stock and deposits of the national banks. The pensioners, who represent the patriotic suffering of the country, have a capitalized investment of six hundred millions of dollars. Here are

seventeen hundred millions of money incapable of receiving anything but instant and lasting injury from inflation. Whatever impairs the purchasing power of the dollar correspondingly decreases the resources of the savings-bank depositor and pensioner. The pensioner's loss would be absolute, but it would probably be argued that the laborer would receive compensation by his nominally larger earnings. But this would prove totally delusive, for no possible augmentation of wages in a time of inflation will ever keep pace with the still greater increase of price in the commodities necessary to sustain life, except—and mark the exception—under the condition witnessed during the war, when the number of laborers was continually reduced by the demand for men to serve in the Army and Navy. And those honest-minded people who recall the startling activity of trade, and the large profits during the war, and attribute both to an inflated currency, commit the error of leaving out the most important element of the calculation. They forget that the Government was a customer for nearly four years at the rate of two or three millions of dollars per day—buying countless quantities of all staple articles; they forget that the number of consumers was continually enlarging as our armed force grew to its gigantic proportions, and that the number of producers was by the same cause continually growing less, and that thus was presented, on a scale of unprecedented magnitude, that simple problem, familiar alike to the political economist and the village trader, of the demand being greater than the supply, and a consequent rise in the price. Had the government been able to conduct the war on a gold basis, and provided the coin for its necessarily large and lavish expenditure, a rise in the price of labor, and a rise in the value of commodities, would have been inevitable. And the rise of both labor

and commodities in gold would have been for the time as marked as in paper, adding, of course, the depreciation of the latter to its scale of prices."

And a little further on, in the same speech, he continued, in words which it may be permissible to quote as showing another of his most cherished ideas, as follows:

"One great and leading interest of my own and other States has suffered, still suffers, and will continue to suffer so long as the currency is of irredeemable paper. I mean the ship-building and navigation interest—one that does more for the country and asks less from it than any other except the agricultural; an interest that represents our distinctive nationality in all climes and upon all seas; an interest more essentially and intensely American than any other that falls under the legislative power of the Government, and which asks only to-day to be left where the founders of the Republic placed it a hundred years ago. Give us the same basis of currency that our great competitors of the British Empire enjoy, and we will, within the life-time of those now living, float a larger tonnage under the American flag than was ever enrolled by one nationality since the science of navigation has been known among men. Aye, more, sir; give us the specie basis, and the merchant marine of America, sailing into all zones and gathering grain from all continents, will bring back to our shores its golden profits, and supply to us that coin which will steady our system and offset the drains that weaken us in other directions. But ships built on the paper basis cannot compete with the lower-priced ones of the gold basis, and whoever advo-

cates a perpetuity of paper money in this country confesses his readiness and willingness to sacrifice the navigation and commercial interest for all time."

This genuine feeling for the honest worker and desire to see labor reap its full reward is, in Mr. Blaine's mind, limited to no particular class, but extends to the farmer as well as to the mechanic and sailor, to those of the West and South as well as to those of the East. He has, in fact, kinships and associations with them all, having been, as he says in one of his public addresses, "born and reared amid an agricultural community in Western Pennsylvania, and lived all the years of my maturer life in the best agricultural district in Maine," besides his briefer experience as far South as Kentucky. It was therefore naturally, and without affectation, that he concluded his address before the State Fair at Minneapolis, in September, 1878, in this strain of prophetic eloquence, conveying a eulogy of the farmer's life worthy of Franklin:

"During all the depression of trade and commerce and manufactures prevailing for these past five years, you have steadily progressed in comfort, independence and wealth. While thousands elsewhere have lacked employment, and many, I fear, have lacked bread, no able-bodied man in Minnesota has been without remunerative labor, and no one has gone to bed hungry. Your pursuits and their results form the basis of the ideal Republic—happily indeed realized within your own borders. The

tendency of all your industry is toward the accumulation of independent competency, and does not favor the upbuilding of colossal fortunes. You are dealing daily with the essential things of life, and not warped in your judgment nor deflected from your course by speculative and illusory schemes of advancement and gain. You are land-owners, free-holders, a proud title that comes to us with centuries of civilization and strength—a title that every man in this country should make it his object to acquire and to honor. Self-government among the owners of the soil in America is an instinct, and where that ownership is widely distributed good government is the rule. Whatever disturbances, therefore, may threaten the peace and order of society, whatever theories, transplanted from other climes, may seek foot-hold here, the Republic of the United States rests securely on that basis of agriculture where the farmers of the Revolution and the framers of the Constitution placed it. The man who possesses broad acres, which he has earned by the sweat of his brow, is not apt to fall in with the doctrine of the Communist, that no one has a right to ownership in the soil. The man who has the product of his labor in wheat and in corn, in pork and in beef, in hides and in wool—commanding gold and silver as they always have and always will in the markets of the world—is not to be led astray with theories of fiat paper and absolute money, but instinctively consigns such wild vagaries to the appropriate domain of fiat folly and absolute nonsense.

The farmers of the Republic will control its destiny. Agriculture, commerce and manufactures are the three pursuits that enrich a nation—but the greatest of these is agriculture—for without its products the spindle cannot turn and the ship will not sail. Agriculture furnishes the conservative element in society, and in the end is the guid-

ing, restraining, controlling force in government. Against storms of popular fury; against frenzied madness that seeks collision with established order; against theories of administration that have drenched other lands in blood; against the spirit of anarchy that would sweep away the landmarks and safeguards of Christian society and Republican government, the farmers of the United States will stand as a shield and the bulwark—themselves the willing subjects of law and therefore its safest and strongest administrators."

And he added, in language that would suffice to meet any idea that his outlook is limited to the Eastern States:

"Gradually the Government of the Republic is passing under the control of the farmers of the Mississippi valley. Indeed it is practically there to-day. The swelling and on-rushing tide of population is toward the plains and the rich acres that lie between the two mountain ranges of the continent. The soil is so fertile, the land so inviting, the area is so broad, that no man may dare calculate the possibilities of this great region, either as respects production or population. Your own State, peopled no more densely than New York, would have a population of nine millions; peopled as densely as Massachusetts, you would have a population of sixteen millions. With the transfer of political control from the old States to the new, there is also transferred a vast weight of responsibility. It is yours to-day; it will be yours still more to-morrow. Take it; use it wisely and well for the advancement of the whole—for the honor of all. The patriotic traditions of the 'old thirteen" that fought the battles of the Revolution, formed the Union of the States,

and planted liberty in the organic laws, will be your safest guide—your highest inspiration, Many of you mingle with your love for Minnesota, your earlier affection for the old home and the old State far to the East, where an honored ancestry lie buried, and where the tenderest memories cluster around the familiar scenes of days long past. It is this kinship of blood, these ties of relationships that make us indeed one people—uniting the East and West, the North and the South, in the indissoluble bond of a common and I trust always beneficent Government."

Mr. Blaine is no fair-weather friend. He has stood by the American workingman when to do so cost obloquy, censure and the loss of favor from influential persons. A considerable part of the opposition to his candidacy to-day, especially among the wealthy Brahmin caste and the fanatical element in Massachusetts, dates from his unhesitating advocacy of the measures to limit the importation of Chinese labor, this being also one of the planks in the platform on which he now stands. When the late William Lloyd Garrison published a denunciation of the Republican Senators who voted for the bill restricting Chinese immigration, Mr. Blaine replied, in a letter to the New York *Tribune*, in February, 1879, showing that there was nothing inconsistent in their action with the traditions of the Republican party in welcoming immigration from Europe of free and law-abiding men, who meant to mingle in good faith with our population, or in protecting the

large colored population already among us and enrolled as citizens. His final and conclusive reason for his action was that the exclusion was necessary in order to prevent the degradation of the American laborer to the level of the coolie, with whom he would otherwise be brought in ruinous competition. He said, "We do not want cheap labor; we do not want dear labor. We want labor at fair rates; at rates that shall give the laborer his fair share, and capital its fair share. If more is sought by capital, less will in the end be realized." After pointing out that coolie labor implied all the evils of the black slave labor against which Mr. Garrison had contended so successfully, and that dangerous civil commotions would result from a sudden and general reduction of wages, Mr. Blaine concluded:

"I feel and know that I am pleading the cause of the free American laborer, and of his children and of his children's children. It has been well said that it is the cause of 'the house against the hovel; of the comforts of the freeman against the squalor of the slave.' It has been charged that my position would arraign labor-saving machinery and condemn it. This answer is not only superficial, it is also absurd. Labor-saving machinery has multiplied the power to pay, has developed new wants, and has continually enlarged the area of labor, and constantly advanced the wages of the laborer. But servile toil has always dragged

free labor to its lowest level, and has stripped it of one muniment after another until it was helpless and hopeless. Whenever that condition comes to the free laborer of America, the Republic of equal rights is gone, and we shall live under the worst of oligarchies—that of mere wealth, whose profit only measures the wretchedness of the unpaid toilsmen that produce it."

CHAPTER VII.

THE ORATOR.

Mr. Blaine has never set himself to gain the reputation of an orator. His public speaking has always been of a practical sort, intended to effect some important object, without time to consider many of the graces of rhetoric. For this purpose his style and manner are well adapted. He is clear, forcible and direct, and always terribly in earnest, a fiery "Rupert of debate." His voice is of good carrying power; his utterance rapid but distinct, and his tall, well-poised figure, constantly in motion; his vigorous gestures and flashing eye, convey his own intensity of conviction, and seem to bear down all opposition before them. By some he has been criticised as almost too vehement, and even brusque in his argument and attack, but it should be understood that this is merely his natural and unconscious manner, and does not mark any personal feeling toward his opponents. No man is more free from this pettiness. He carries away no resentments from the hardest tussle of logic and argument, always meets good-humor and compliment in the course of it with equal heartiness, and only resorts to personal

retort upon the strongest provocation. Some of his warmest friends have been those with whom he had the most doughty verbal conflicts upon the floor of Congress or the campaign rostrum. But, on the few occasions, when he has had time to study his language and expression, he has easily risen to heights which show that his reputation as an orator is at least potentially deserved, and might have been made as actual as that of a Chatham or a Sheridan. Such an instance is the conclusion of his matchless address in commemoration of the martyred Garfield, delivered before the great auditory that assembled in the Hall of Representatives, on the 27th day of February, 1882. With exquisite simplicity, but with the deepest feeling apparent in every word, he then said:

"On the morning of Saturday, July 2d, the President was a contented and happy man—not in an ordinary degree, but joyfully, almost boyishly happy. On his way to the railroad station, to which he drove slowly, in conscious enjoyment of the beautiful morning, with an unwonted sense of leisure and a keen anticipation of pleasure, his talk was all in the grateful and gratulatory vein. He felt that after four months of trial his administration was strong in its grasp of affairs, strong in popular favor, and destined to grow stronger; that grave difficulties confronting him at his inauguration had been safely passed; that trouble

lay behind him and not before him; that he was soon to meet the wife whom he loved, now recovering from an illness which had but lately disquieted, and, at times, almost unnerved him; that he was going to his Alma Mater to renew the most cherished associations of his young manhood, and to exchange greetings with those whose deepening interest had followed every step of his upward progress from the day he entered upon his college course until he had attained the loftiest elevation in the gift of his countrymen.

"Surely, if happiness can ever come from the honors or triumphs of this world, on that quiet July morning James A. Garfield may well have been a happy man. No foreboding of evil haunted him; no slightest premonition of danger clouded his sky. His terrible fate was upon him in an instant. One moment he stood erect, strong, confident in the years stretching peacefully out before him. The next he lay wounded, bleeding, helpless, doomed to weary weeks of torture, to silence, and the grave.

"Great in life, he was surpassingly great in death. For no cause, in the very frenzy of wantonness and wickedness, by the red hand of murder, he was thrust from the full tide of this world's interest, from its hopes, its aspirations, its victories, into the visible presence of death—and he did not quail. Not alone, for the one short moment in which, stunned and dazed, he could

give up life, hardly aware of its relinquishment, but through days of deadly languor, through weeks of agony, that was not less agony because silently borne, with clear sight and calm courage, he looked into his open grave. What blight and ruin met his anguished eyes, whose lips may tell—what brilliant, broken plans, what baffled, high ambitions, what sundering of strong, warm, manhood's friendships, what bitter rending of sweet household ties! Behind him a proud, expectant nation, a great host of sustaining friends, a cherished and happy mother, wearing the full, rich honors of her early toil and tears; the wife of his youth, whose whole life lay in his; the little boys not yet emerged from childhood's day of frolic; the fair young daughter; the sturdy sons just springing into closest companionship, claiming every day and every day rewarding a father's love and care; and in his heart the eager, rejoicing power to meet all demand. Before him, desolation and great darkness! And his soul was not shaken. His countrymen were thrilled with instant, profound, and universal sympathy. Masterful in his mortal weakness, he became the centre of a nation's love, enshrined in the prayers of a world. But all the love and all the sympathy could not share with him his suffering. He trod the wine-press alone. With unfaltering front he faced death. With unfailing tenderness he took leave of life. Above the demoniac hiss of the

assassin's bullet he heard the voice of God. With simple resignation he bowed to the divine decree.

"As the end drew near, his early craving for the sea returned. The stately mansion of power had been to him the wearisome hospital of pain, and he begged to be taken from its prison walls, from its oppressive, stifling air, from its homelessness and its hopelessness. Gently, silently, the love of a great people bore the pale sufferer to the longed-for healing of the sea, to live or to die, as God should will, within sight of its heaving billows, within sound of its manifold voices. With wan, fevered face tenderly lifted to the cooling breeze, he looked out wistfully upon the ocean's changing wonders; on its far sails, whitening in the morning light; on its restless waves, rolling shoreward to break and die beneath the noonday sun; on the red clouds of evening, arching low to the horizon; on the serene and shining pathway of the stars. Let us think that his dying eyes read a mystic meaning which only the rapt and parting soul may know. Let us believe that in the silence of the receding world he heard the great waves breaking on a farther shore, and felt already upon his wasted brow the breath of the eternal morning."

There is nothing simpler or more feeling in the English language. New beauties will be found in it as it is read over and over again.

As an example of Mr. Blaine's directness, force and condensation in his public utterances, the following is given, and a stronger platform of principles could not well be formulated. Mr. Buchanan, after he was nominated for the Presidency, wrote: "I am no longer James Buchanan, but the Cincinnati platform." Mr. Blaine, however, did not hesitate—long in advance—to give his political creed, thus: "The mighty power of a republic of fifty millions of people," said he, "with a continent for their possession, can only be wielded permanently by being wielded honestly. In a fair and generous struggle for partisan power let us not forget those issues and those ends which are above party. Organized wrong will ultimately be met by organized resistance. The sensitive and dangerous point is in the casting and the counting of free ballots. Impartial suffrage is our theory. It must become our practice. Any party of American citizens can bear to be defeated. No party of American citizens will bear to be defrauded. The men who are interested in a dishonest count are units. The men who are interested in an honest count are millions. I wish to speak for the millions of all political parties, and in their name to declare that the Republic must be strong enough, and shall be strong enough, to protect the weakest of its citizens in all their rights."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BRILLIANT SPEAKER.

THE period of the Speakership, from 1869 to 1875, was, all things considered, the most brilliant of Mr. Blaine's brilliant career up to the present. The office is legally the third greatest in the government of the United States, and in the hands of a man of genius it easily becomes the second, if not the first, in importance. Although the House of Representatives may not have the same "omnipotence" that is ascribed to the English House of Commons, it has the same control over the money-power, and its presiding officer wields an influence out of all comparison to that of his English compeer. The British Speaker is almost a machine, and to him the satirical description aimed by the well-known humorist, Mr. Donn Piatt, at Mr. Blaine, is more truly applicable, "two-thirds parliamentary law, and one-third gavel." Mr. Peel, like his predecessors for centuries, is not subject to the mutation of politics, but expects to hold his place like a judge on the bench, during good behavior, or until retired after twenty years with a title and pension.

The American Speaker occupies a position at

once immensely more difficult and more distinguished. He is elected by the party in the majority at the time, as their representative and exponent, yet he is expected to preserve judicial impartiality toward the opposition, who watch his every word and act, and are quick to protest against what they consider any unfairness. His control over all kinds of legislation, public and private, and his consequent responsibility, is almost beyond explanation to those not familiar therewith. Two points will suffice to give an idea of his power.

In the first place, the Speaker alone decides the personnel of all the committees, those lesser Houses of Congress, in which all legislation is digested and put in form, where the initial battles over every measure are fought, and which by their power of reporting, or not reporting bills, possess a veto power almost equal to that of the President. The Speaker directs absolutely and without appeal, who shall be chairman of each, who shall be his associates, and from what faction or element in the party selected, and who shall represent the minority element. He must also assign places to those troublesome political nondescripts who are occasionally sent up by erratic constituencies—Greenbackers, Independents, Labor Party men, and fanatics of all shades, who do not fit into any regular scheme. A power so liable to abuse or mismangement in weak or

malicious hands has often caused agitation in favor of some method of selecting the list of committeemen by balloting in caucus, as it is done in the Senate, owing to the regular presiding officer there (the Vice President) not being chosen by that body. This agitation was never heard of while Mr. Blaine filled the Speaker's chair.

A second power, inherent in the place, is that of recognizing or not recognizing those who rise with the intent of "catching that desirable disease, the Speaker's eye." In so large and turbulent a body as the House, it is not to be supposed that the Speaker allows his visual orb to wander at random, hitting whom it may, and awarding that man the floor, as it were, by lot. This method would indeed be difficult when two or a dozen, or indeed all the members, appear to be standing at once, clamoring "Mr. Speaker!" in that hubbub of different notes and accents that so confounds the unaccustomed visitor. Partly by previous arrangement, in which the Speaker must constantly use his best powers of discretion, partly by rapid decision in his own mind, he singles out those whom the interests of the party, or the demands of fairness, entitle to the honor, and thereby molds the expression of sentiment as well as the course of legislation in the House, save so far as he is controlled by the rules or by long custom, which also he decides upon and interprets.

In such a place, Mr. Blaine's powers and dis-

position shone resplendent. Much of his immense popularity dates from this era. It may be allowed to dwell for a moment, with renewed admiration, upon the stirring spectacle which was presented by the greatest speaker, since Henry Clay, in this meridian light. Even excluding all regard for the man, an enemy would have been fascinated and delighted, in spite of rancor, by the sheer intellectual force and perfect self-command displayed. The Speaker seemed born to preside over just such an assemblage as that in which he found himself. Patient in the tedious passages of debate and routine, courteous under harrassing interruptions, impartial to friend and chivalric to foe, he rapidly rose with the rising tide of excitement and activity, caused by important business or personal feeling, towering to his full height, his voice, with something of the ring of the clarion in it, penetrating the loudest tumult, the gavel in his practised hand chiming in with varied tones that aptly enforced his words, from the sharp rat-tat-tat that recalled the House to decorum, to the vigorous thunder that actually drowned unparliamentary speech; rulings, repartee, translucent explanation flashing from his lips as quick as lightning, to the discomfiture of every assailant who tilted against him, until, with the whole House in full cry, the waves of debate rolling and surging around the base of the marble throne, on which the Speaker is installed, he seemed, like the

creature of Addison's imagination, to "ride on the whirlwind and direct the storm."

This is not the language of exaggerated praise, but simply an attempt to convey the impression made upon every spectator who could understand anything of the physical and intellectual force involved. Mr. Blaine's rulings upon the complicated points of order so constantly arising under our system of parliamentary law, and artfully thrust upon every Speaker, by rivals in his own party as well as in the opposition, had all the delightfulness of the solution of a difficult problem in logic or mathematics. The manner in which he repeatedly brought order out of chaos, or cut the House free from some apparently hopeless snarl, with a dozen Gordian knots in it, by a few sweeping strokes, right and left, with his keen mental blade, and started business forward with a grand rush often drew a ripple of applause from the whole House and the galleries, the more so that he never seemed to pose for such recognition. Most Speakers are carefully coached, either openly or on the sly, by the subordinates around them at the desk, but Mr. Blaine's knowledge of the manual, as well of the name and antecedents of every member before him, seemed to be instinctive, and he was better fitted to give than to receive information on any such points. His feats in this particular cannot be understood without reference to the marvelous memory and the

thoroughness of application to the work before him, which are necessarily mentioned so often in writing about him. As he had prepared for his first editorial work, by mastering the important contents of his journal for years previously, so it is probable that he prepared for the Speakership by almost committing to memory, the Digest and rules and the membership list of the three successive Congresses in which he was Speaker.

His grip on the order of business and the exact bearings of a complicated tangle of amendments and cross-motions, was equally marvelous. Though of inferior importance, his physical qualifications are not unworthy to be mentioned in the same breath. He looked as if fitted by nature for his station. His dexterity and quickness made it almost amusing to see him count the House on a rising vote, and country visitors stared with wonder at the splintered trench in the hard desk-lid, carved with the gavel, backed by his sinewy wrist, at each annual session. Above all, were his fairness and anxiety to do right. Without a sign of weakness or cowardice, he conceded to every member, and every faction, the same courtesy and the same due meed of recognition. Personally, he was on friendly terms with the leaders of the Democratic minority, for his parliamentary wrangles with Mr. Randall, Mr. Cox and others, though he often turned the laugh upon them by the brightness and wittiness of his

retorts, were of a nature not to leave a sting behind. It was sharp give-and-take, while it lasted, but for himself, he asked no odds, and he took no unfair advantages. He never used the great weight of his position, as could so easily have been done, to bear down any member, however weak and friendless, unless that member had made himself an intolerable nuisance, and the whole House sympathized with its presiding officer in suppressing him. Still more wonderful, Mr. Blaine preserved amity with the leaders of his own party upon the floor, who were, in some sense, his rivals, keeping the balance of power with them and among them, without drawing their resentment upon himself. On occasion he showed that he was a leader, and not a follower, by taking a vigorous stand to oppose the faction, to which he then first gave the name of "Stalwart," who pushed on the measure, his wisdom knew to be extreme, in the "Bill to protect electors," better known as the Force Bill, giving President Grant the right to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus* at pleasure in the Southern States, and to use martial law in suppressing the Ku Klux Klan.

Foreseeing that the liberty-loving sentiment of the North, especially in the "doubtful States," would be repelled by this excessive stretch of arbitrary power, Mr. Blaine, not content with opposing it in caucus, deliberately courting the risk and cost of such an unusual step, came down from

the Speaker's chair, and threw his influence upon the floor against the adoption of the bill. The after-cost to him through many years was indeed great, although President Grant tacitly admitted the weight of his argument by soon after refusing the aid of the army to Governor Ames, of Mississippi.

All this added, however, to Mr. Blaine's popularity with men whose good esteem is worth having, and after his party had been washed into a minority by a tidal wave caused partly by not fully adopting the moderation he advised, his leave-taking of the chair was an extraordinary scene. So far was it from being a manifestation of triumph by the party which was to elect his successor, that it was rather an occasion of deep feeling over the loss of a presiding officer who was able, impartial and well-liked, and who had conferred marked dignity and lustre on the place. Mr. Blaine, at 12 o'clock noon on the day of the dissolution of that Congress, delivered the usual valedictory of the session and his term of office, in one of the five minute speeches which he knows so well how to adapt to the occasion and the audience, and then, declaring the House adjourned, brought down his gavel hard and let it fall from his practised hand. Following is the record of his closing address:

Mr. Blaine said: "*Gentlemen:* I close with this hour a six years' service as Speaker of the House

of Representatives—a period surpassed in length by but two of my predecessors, and equaled by only two others. The rapid mutations of personal and political fortune in this country have limited the great majority of those who have occupied this chair to shorter terms of office.

"It would be the gravest insensibility to the honors and responsibilities of life not to be deeply touched by so signal a mark of public esteem as that which I have thrice received at the hands of my political associates. I desire in this last moment to renew to them, one and all, my thanks and my gratitude.

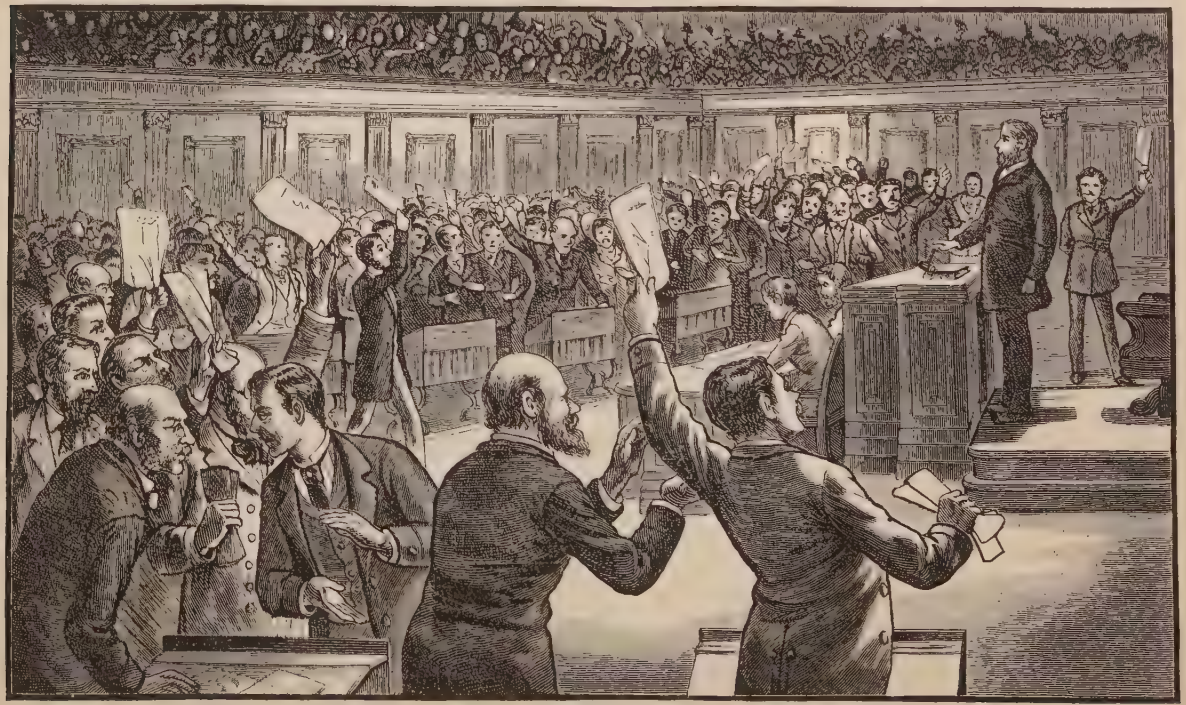
"To those from whom I differ in my party relations—the minority of this House—I tender my acknowledgements for the generous courtesy with which they have treated me. By one of those sudden and decisive changes which distinguish popular institutions, and which conspicuously mark a free people, that minority is transformed in the ensuing Congress to the governing power of the House. However it might possibly have been under other circumstances, that event necessarily renders these words my farewell to the Chair.

"The Speakership of the American House of Representatives is a post of honor, of dignity, of power, of responsibility. Its duties are at once complex and continuous; they are both onerous and delicate; they are performed in the broad

light of day, under the eye of the whole people, subject at all times to the closest observation, and always attended with the sharpest criticism. I think no other official is held to such instant and such rigid accountability. Parliamentary rulings in their very nature are peremptory ; almost absolute in authority and instantaneous in effect. They cannot always be enforced in such a way as to win applause or secure popularity ; but I am sure that no man of any party who is worthy to fill this chair will ever see a dividing line between duty and policy.

"Thanking you once more, and thanking you cordially, for the honorable testimonial you have placed on record to my credit, I perform my only remaining duty in declaring that the Forty-third Congress has reached its constitutional limit, and that the House of Representatives stands adjourned without day."

So far from dispersing, as Mr. Blaine stepped lightly down from the rostrum, the crowded assemblage, floor and galleries, rose, and greeted him with repeated salvos of applause, running in waves from side to side, with almost delirious cheering, clapping of hands, and waving of handkerchiefs. Fully five minutes, it seemed, he was detained, bowing and acknowledging, with emotion, this tribute to the record he had made, and for full half an hour there poured toward his standing place, at the clerk's desk, a constant stream



HON. JAMES G. BLAINE'S RETIREMENT FROM THE SPEAKERSHIP.

of members and citizens, anxious to press his hand and express in words the admiration and regret already shown in signs. None who were there can forget the impression made by this scene.

His parliamentary decisions live in print, and have been quoted as authority, in foreign lands as well as in this, but the gracefulness, eloquence and wit with which they were delivered, and his whole conduct of the business of the House, through six years of a great and trying period, can only be left to the memory of those who were actual spectators.

CHAPTER IX.

DARKER DAYS.

To the period of Mr. Blaine's triumphal success as Speaker of the House was to succeed a brief one which, unhappily, afforded an almost total contrast of gloom and adverse circumstance. But to those who reflect, it will show his innate greatness of mind and heart, perhaps even more strongly displayed than in the flush of his success. If it be not pedantic to quote, it might be said that he had taken for his motto, "*Ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito!*" His wide and well-earned popularity was apparently to be obscured, at least so far as any benefit to him was concerned. Instead of friendly regards from both parties, the Democracy were to be more stirred up against him than they were against the extremest Radicals, while he was cruelly assailed from the rear by a cross-fire from personal factions, which, while they hated each other, hated him still worse for his towering eminence as a presidential candidate; finally, it seemed as if the stars in their courses were fighting against him, when the midsummer sun struck him prostrate at the crisis of his career, upon the steps of his house of prayer.

It is almost painful to write of this portion of his life, so full is it of manifestations of human malice and depravity against him, some of which still survive; and the story is relieved only by Mr. Blaine's manly and courageous bearing, under all the tempests which assailed his prospects, and that which was dearer than life to him—his unspotted good name.

To fully explain the causes of the position in which Mr. Blaine found himself, it must be remembered what kind of a majority it was which the Democracy sent to the House of Representatives for the first time since the war. The lenity which Mr. Blaine had bravely advised toward the South, the withdrawal of the last vestiges of that military control which he saw would not be supported by the sentiment of the North, had left the old leaders of the South free to regain power, by intimidating and "counting out," the negro vote. They came back to Congress full of the ideas which had prevailed before 1861, added to and embittered by the memory of their disastrous appeal to arms. They found a number of allies from the Northern States ready to meet and greet them, the usual Republican majority from that section being diminished by scandals in the civil administration of the government, for the existence of which, or the busy stirring-up they received in the interests of a particular candidate for the Presidency, Mr. Blaine was in no wise

responsible. The Southerners naturally thought old times had revived for them; that they could dominate their Northern associates as of yore, and with their cooperation guide the whole country into any policy they chose. The extraordinary number of ex-officers of the Rebel army in both branches of Congress, caused the phrase "the Rebel brigadiers" to become a by-word in speaking of their action. They expected to redress all the "wrongs" they had suffered, to nullify all the legislation of the war, and as many as possible of its results, and with the fulcrum of a solid South (an ominous expression then first heard), to gain the Presidency, and sway the whole Union. Unseemly notes of triumph were heard from the hot heads among them, such as "the Confederacy is in the saddle again." Their ill-gotten triumph was abused in many ways, as by turning out crippled Union soldiers employed about the Capitol, and putting in former wearers of the gray, and the loyal men and Republicans seemed too dispirited to resent these insults to their cause.

Mr. Blaine, who naturally became the leader of that almost "forlorn hope," the minority in the House, saw that something must be done to rouse his party and the country from apathy, and to set the full results of the expected triumph of a Solid South over a divided North, in the proper light. To do this it was necessary for him to perform

the trying manœuvre known in military parlance as "drawing the enemy's fire," a dangerous service not attempted for bravado, but to learn the position and intentions of the foe, and make him betray the nature and armament of his force. Occasions were soon supplied by the overweening confidence and almost insolence of the majority.

One of the most cherished notions of the re-united ex-Confederate and Copperhead Democracy was what was known as General Amnesty, or the sweeping repeal of all the political disabilities imposed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, upon those who, having once taken the oath of allegiance as a civil or military officer of the United States, or any State, had engaged in rebellion or given aid or comfort to rebels. This very mild punishment of treason, as Mr. Blaine showed in his masterly and exhaustive argument upon it, had been further alleviated by general acts of limitation, and by special acts for the relief of individuals, until little or nothing remained. It only applied, in the first instance, to about eighteen thousand men in the South. The first relief bill passed, removed the disability from 1578 citizens of the South, and the next bill from no less than 3526 at one swoop. A constant stream of smaller bills benefitting one or more individuals succeeded, the Republicans having all the time two-thirds majority in both branches,

and finally, in May, 1872, a general law was adopted, removing their disabilities from all persons except members of the 36th and 37th Congresses, officers in the military, judicial, and naval service of the United States, heads of Departments, and foreign ministers of the United States. The relief of individuals still continued, and in no instance, save one, was relief refused upon the presentation of a respectful petition, which had become requisite by custom, and in no instance, save one, was there other than a unanimous vote.

Not content with all this, the "brigadiers" were intent upon blotting out the last vestige of punishment for treason from the statute book, and wished to throw the pearl of citizenship at the feet of those who spurned it, and still gloried in open defiance of the Government. They attempted to put their action on the ground of "magnanimity," not seeming to see that there was no magnanimity in a set of men extending pardon to themselves, when by the strange fluctuations of politics, they found themselves well nigh supreme in the Government they had fought to overthrow. Mr. Blaine saw the opportunity. The courage and eloquence which he displayed in meeting it will be referred to further on. At this point an outline may be given of the course which he pursued.

Shoulder to shoulder with James A. Garfield, a

man of equal kindliness and conservatism; but who, like himself, never confounded those qualities with neglect of duty, Mr. Blaine withstood the too confident advance of the Democratic phalanx, over the trampled memories, gains and glories of the war, just as he had withstood the advocates of the Force Bill. He moved to except from the operation of any general amnesty, "Jefferson Davis, late president of the so-called Confederate States," and also to require that all those availing themselves of the benefit of the proposed act should take the oath of allegiance in some Federal court. The reasons for the second proviso were obvious: those for the first were given in one of his most earnest speeches. He said that careful investigation, made at his request, had showed that there were still under disabilities about 325 ex-officers of the army, 295 of the navy, with enough under the other categories in the act of 1872 to make about 750 in all. To none of these, so far as he knew, was there any objection, save one, and he went on, with his usual easy ascent, to a climax of crushing force, that he did not aim to except Jefferson Davis because that person was, as he had been called, the head and front of the Rebellion; on that score the ex-President was no more nor less guilty than thousands of others already amnested; probably he was less efficient as an enemy of the United States, and far more useful as a disturber of the counsels of the Confederacy than most of them.

But he ought to be excepted on the ground, that he was the author, "knowingly, deliberately, guiltily and willfully, of the gigantic murders and crimes of Andersonville."

Reference to this fearful prison-pen at once aroused intense excitement, but Mr. Blaine continued, while the faces of the ex-Confederate leaders paled with rage, as they understood how they were driven to the defensive, that he had read of the historic horrors of past times, but that before God, measuring his words, he could declare that neither the deeds of Alva in the Low Countries, nor the massacre of St. Bartholemew's, nor the thumbscrews and engines of torture of the Spanish Inquisition, began to compare in atrocity with the hideous crime of Andersonville. He was here met with a storm of mingled applause and indignant protest, but his preparation had been as thorough as usual, and he went on with pitiless severity, quoting from the testimony of Southern witnesses and official records, nothing extenuating, nor setting down aught in malice, and wound up with this fiery sentence: "I hear it said, 'We will lift Mr. Davis again into great consequence by refusing amnesty.' That is not for me to consider; I only see before me, when his name is presented, a man who, by the wink of his eye, by a wave of his hand, by a nod of his head, could have stopped the atrocity at Andersonville. Some of us had kinsmen there, most of us had friends

there, all of us had countrymen there, and in the name of those kinsmen, friends and countrymen, I here protest, and shall with my vote protest, against calling back and crowning with the honors of full American citizenship the man who organized that murder."

The Southern members hastily consulted together, and next day put forward Benjamin H. Hill, of Georgia, to answer the champion of the Republicans. In many respects, this was the best choice they could have made. The Georgians are often called the "Yankees of the South," and are supposed to be cooler in temper, more business-like and abler to cope in sagacity with their Northern brethern, than the citizens of the other cotton states. Mr. Hill was not a "brigadier," but had been a member of the Confederate Senate, and, it was believed, of rather a conservative stripe. He was a forcible, even eloquent, speaker, and a man of wide information and experience in affairs.

It has been said, both by those who approved Mr. Blaine's bold course and those who deplored it, that it was a mistake for the Southern leaders to attempt any reply to him ; that if they had only remained silent his speech would have failed of all effect, and he would have been left in the position of a foiled disturber of the peace. This notion, unjust to Mr. Blaine, proceeds on an inadequate knowledge of the facts in the case.

If the Southern leaders had entertained no sinister designs upon the Government, if they had made no exaggerated promises to their people at home, if they had been wholly sincere in their professions of renewed devotion to the Union, they might, indeed, have preserved a lofty silence under all that Mr. Blaine could say. But none knew better than he that to keep silence was to them impossible, and he was determined that they should speak out frankly what was in their minds and hearts.

Their position, for one thing, would have been wholly illogical. They were determined to carry "in the centennial year," as they were fond of saying, an act of amnesty which should actually drag into full citizenship men who, like Robert Toombs, publicly spat upon and reviled the proffered gift. Mr. Blaine tendered them an act of amnesty with only the two provisos above spoken of, one excepting Jeff. Davis, the other requiring the oath of allegiance. To justify their rejection of this offer, it became absolutely necessary for them to defend Davis from the charges brought against him, and in so doing they revealed their whole doctrine and belief about the Civil War and its results. Moreover, their people at home would not have been satisfied with any policy of silence. Few or none of the Southern Congressmen would have dared to face their constituents after allowing such a speech as that of the "Maine Yankee" to go unanswered.

First, Mr. S. S. Cox, on the part of the Northern Democrats, opened the attack with a burst of wit and raillery, like a skirmish of light horse, and then Mr. Hill advanced in massive column, like Pickett at Gettysburg. The line which he took justified all Mr. Blaine's expectations. It was a general assault upon the North. Not content with arguing that Jefferson Davis was never proven guilty of complicity with Winder and Wirz, Mr. Hill went on to argue that the sufferings at Andersonville, Belle Isle and Libbey were due to the unreasonable refusal of the Federal Government to exchange prisoners, and still more that, the Confederate prisoners at Elmira and elsewhere, were treated quite as badly or worse; that they were vaccinated with impure virus, crowded into pest houses to die and buried in trenches. He wound up by inveighing against the "'higher law' fanaticism that never kept a pledge nor obeyed a law," and by inviting the men of the North to join with those of the South against those who had "denounced the Union as a 'covenant with death and a league with hell,'" evidently meaning the old Abolitionists and their successors in the Republican party.

The next day, January 12, 1876, Mr. Garfield, with a thoroughness of preparation resembling that of Mr. Blaine, delivered one of his grand speeches. It was a complete vindication of the

position of the Republican party on the question of amnesty. Bringing back the argument from the wide range which Mr. Hill had given it to the exact question before the House, Mr. Garfield showed, from official testimony, nearly all from Southern sources, that Jefferson Davis personally sent the infamous Winder to Andersonville, and obstinately sustained him there in all his actions, against the protests of the humane officers, surgeons, inspectors and newspapers of the South. Turning to the question of Elmira, he cried, "The lightning is our witness!" and showed the despatches that had poured in upon him in answer to the infamous charges, of course made upon hearsay, contained in Mr. Hill's speech. Finally, he proved that the alleged refusal of the Federal authorities to exchange prisoners was caused by the refusal of the Confederates to recognize the brave negroes fighting in the armies of the Union as entitled to the rights of civilized warfare.

Mr. Blaine followed in a summing-up of what had been established. He humorously remarked that the gentleman from Georgia reminded him of Horace Greeley's description of the difficulties of a certain militia general in a street parade: "He tries to keep step to the music of the Union, and dodge his fire-eating constituency in Georgia." He disposed of Mr. Cox by citing a speech of that gentleman during the war, in which he had spoken of the "inhumane, barbarous, horrible treatment

inflicted upon our soldiers held as prisoners by the rebels," and said that the latter had "made brutes and fiends of themselves." Turning upon Mr. Hill, he read with vehemence a resolution introduced in the Confederate Senate in October, 1862, by "Senator Hill, of Georgia," providing that every person pretending to be a soldier or officer of the United States who should be captured on the soil of the Confederate States, should be presumed to have come with intent to incite insurrection and abet murder, and, unless he could prove the contrary, should suffer death; also an act, reported by the same gentleman, for inflicting the penalty of death upon every officer commanding negro or mulatto troops in arms against the Confederate States. He demanded what these meant, to which there was, of course, no reply. Before closing, Mr. Blaine, with his usual chivalric generosity, resented a remark of Mr. Hill's, which seemed to reflect upon the President, and rebuked him for saying in effect that Jefferson Davis was no more responsible for Winder and Wirz than General Grant for McDonald and Joyce, when, in fact, the President had lately made his famous memorandum, "Let no guilty man escape." When he closed, there was little more to be said for or against Andersonville, with its dead-line, its treeless desert open to the sun, its single stagnant stream, its bloodhounds, and the Florida artillery ranged in line to fire upon the stockade

if General Sherman's army came within seven miles distance.

The next day, the 14th, Mr. Blaine gave a little exhibition of that parliamentary skill which has made part of his fame, and also rendered him, while he remained in the House, something of a terror to other occupants of the Speaker's chair, and to the ill-led, undisciplined Democratic majority which he confronted. It had been attempted to force through the General Amnesty bill without debate, but it failed for want of a two-thirds vote. This gave Mr. Blaine, although in the minority, the right to move to reconsider, and to announce his intention of offering an amendment for which, he said, his side would vote. All the debate was founded upon this motion. He finally asked unanimous consent that his substitute might be considered, with the privilege to both parties of offering amendments. Eager to signify their resentment toward him, the Democrats shouted objections, and it was thought that Mr. Blaine was for once disconcerted. They forgot that he still had complete control of his motion to reconsider, on which no action had been taken, and with a smile, he withdrew it, and with it, all chance of continuing the debate or reviving "general amnesty" for that session, leaving the Democrats, as it were, gasping with surprise.

So ended the great debate. One very similar ensued in the Senate in March, 1879, when both

Mr. Blaine and Mr. Hill had been promoted to that body by their respective states. The question, then, was over the exclusion of Jefferson Davis by name from the benefits of the pension bill for the survivors of the Mexican war, and it will be remembered that the late Senator Chandler, of Michigan, was aroused by it to deliver that five minutes' speech of burning eloquence, every word of which seemed to come straight from his indignant heart, and which forever fixed the place of Jefferson Davis in all rightful public opinion. It was a tribute to the tone and temper in which these eminent men, the regretted Senator from Georgia, as well as Mr. Blaine, conducted this very trying discussion, that it was no bar to their afterwards becoming the closest personal friends.

At the time, the effect of the debate was most pronounced. The Republicans and loyal men of the North (whose letters of approval poured in upon their advocate), plucked up spirit when they found that they need not tamely submit to the revived arrogance of the South. The representatives of the latter section almost unconsciously took a more considerate tone and abated some of the worst of their pretensions. Nevertheless, they were intensely embittered against Mr. Blaine; though, if they had but known it, he had done them an important service in teaching them the difficult lesson of moderation for the future. To overthrow, either in general debate, or in the tactics of

legislation, an adversary so thoroughly armed at all points, they discovered, after very few attempts, to be impossible. They studied out a more terrible revenge, which it would be easier to look back upon with calmness were it not necessary to think that rivals of Mr. Blaine almost at the head of the official household of his own party, aided and abetted it in the hope of clearing the way for their own futile ambition.

It was an era of investigations. Imitating the Credit Mobilier inquiry which Mr. Blaine had moved for his own vindication while Speaker, the Democrats in the House, eager to justify their charges of corruption against the Republican party, set out on a wild hunt for something wrong in every branch of the public service, or as it was sometimes expressed, cast a drag-net which they hoped would bring to light some piece of scandal that would benefit their cause. Every committee of the House became an investigating committee, and instead of confining itself to work upon legislation, summoned and examined, at great expense, every witness they thought might serve their purpose. A certain class of newspapers and their correspondents entered eagerly into the work, set the committees and their spies on new trails, and published every fact and rumor in exaggerated form. Everybody was investigated, from heads of departments to private citizens who had formed a pool to buy real estate.

It is needless to say that, up to this time, no breath of suspicion had touched Mr. Blaine. He had come through the troublous years during and after the war, when so many fell into temptation, without even a smell of fire upon his garments. Not a whisper was heard against his fame as an honest and disinterested legislator. Those who knew him best in his own State were most confident of his integrity and proudest of his record.

But the National Convention of 1876 was rapidly approaching. The waves of enthusiasm for the candidacy of Blaine were already rolling high in Pennsylvania and other great States, and they were not diminished by the humiliation he had inflicted on the towering pride of the Southern leaders in Congress. "Reform" candidates, "machine" candidates, and candidates of all kinds were at a discount compared with the people's candidate whose name was upon every tongue. It was necessary to dispose of him in some way, and the baffled brigadiers were easily persuaded to turn upon him one or more of those mud machines—their investigating committees.

Representative J. Proctor Knott, of Kentucky, was pushed on by both these elements, to undertake the task of demolishing Mr. Blaine in reputation and prospects. The time was selected shortly before the meeting of the Convention, so that he might be aspersed, and yet have no opportunity to answer. The charges were first spread

through the public press in the form of vague innuendo and surmise, so that it was almost impossible to fix upon anything definite to contradict, while yet the public mind was put on the alert to receive something further, and hints were given that astonishing revelations would shortly be made. By degrees the allegations narrowed down to some degree of definiteness. It was not charged that Mr. Blaine was a perjurer, a defaulter, a swindling contractor, or an oppressor of the poor; his moral character in private life was admitted to be above reproach; but the head and front of his offending was that he had held stock or bonds of certain Western railways, and it was charged that he was unduly favored in his investments, on account of his official position. The first accusations of this kind brought to his notice were "like a dewdrop from the lion's mane, shaken to air." It was published that Mr. Blaine had been mixed up in a transaction with Thomas A. Scott, then president of the Union Pacific Railroad Company, by which he had received, in some way, for some reason not stated, $64,000 in cash, through the banking house of Morton, Bliss & Co. Rising in his place, on April 24th, 1876, Mr. Blaine not only denied the story in all its Protean forms, but exhibiting telegrams from the treasurer and president of the Union Pacific, from Morton, Bliss & Co., and from Thomas A. Scott, proving its utter falsity. He

then went on, voluntarily, to explain his connection with the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad Company, on which the charge had partly been founded, showing that he had invested as any private citizen or business man has a right to invest his funds, and instead of a gainer had been a heavy loser by the venture. He concluded in these words: "I am now, Mr. Speaker, in the fourteenth year of a not inactive service in this Hall. I have taken and given blows. I have no doubt said many things in the heat of debate which I would now gladly recall. I have no doubt, given votes, which in fuller light I would gladly change. But I have never done anything in my public career, for which I could be put to the faintest blush in any presence, or for which I cannot answer to my constituents, my conscience and the great Searcher of hearts."

On the 1st of May Mr. Blaine was called upon to deny another fabrication, which had appeared in that consistently hostile sheet, the New York *Herald*. It was to the effect that he had received as a gift, certain bonds of the Kansas Pacific Railroad, that there were witnesses of the transfer to him, and that he was concerned in a suit about them in the courts of Kansas. Mr. Blaine again went to the trouble of obtaining letters from all these pretended "witnesses," Messrs. Stewart and Riddle, prominent lawyers in Washington, and Messrs. Gibson and Macfarland, newspaper cor-

respondents, expressly denying that they knew of any such affair ; and General Thomas Ewing wrote from Lancaster, O., that the Mr. Blaine suing in Kansas was John E. Blaine, brother of the Ex-Speaker, an early settler in the state, who had bought stock in the Kansas Pacific before his elder brother was even nominated for Congress. Mr. Blaine concluded his personal explanation thus: "Having now noticed the two that have been so extensively circulated, I shall refrain from calling the attention of the House to any others that may be invented. To quote the language of another, 'I do not propose to make my public life a perpetual and uncomfortable flea-hunt, in the vain effort to run down stories which have no basis in truth, which are usually anonymous, and whose total refutation brings no punishment to those who have been guilty of originating them.'"

The very next day a resolution was introduced in the House to investigate an alleged purchase by the Union Pacific Railroad Company for a price "in excess of their actual or market value" of certain bonds of the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad. Mr. Tarbox, of Massachusetts (who defeated and succeeded "Ben." Butler), personally assured Mr. Frye that the resolution was not aimed at his colleague, Mr. Blaine, and it was adopted without objection. Almost the moment the inquiry began it was apparent that it was aimed wholly at Mr. Blaine. He did not

complain of this. The gentleman from whom he had previously received telegrams appeared in person and fully vindicated him. He asked only for an early report to the House and the country to which he was entitled in justice; but with evident malice the proceedings were allowed to drag and drag until, when all the witnesses possible had been called, the sub-committee of the committee on the Judiciary, who had the matter in charge, suddenly turned, under the pretext of a general "drag-net" resolution adopted in the previous January, to investigate a transaction of the Northern Pacific Railroad Company, on a newspaper report that there had been some effort by Mr. Blaine to procure a share in that road for a friend in Boston. While this particular mud-machine was at work, a masked battery of the same kind in another part of the Capitol, known as the Real Estate Pool Committee, was desperately endeavoring to find ammunition for a third assault on the Maine statesman, without giving him the slightest notice or opportunity to defend himself.

An exposure of Mr. Blaine's private correspondence was promised, and some witnesses from Boston, named Fisher and Mulligan, were summoned to Washington to disclose all they knew. The lovers of scandal, for the sake of scandal, were almost crazed with delight at the prospect of the revelations. The whole phase of the question

was changed, however, by the fact that Mr. Blaine possessed himself of the letters and of a memorandum, prepared by one of the witnesses, giving an abstract of them. Many of Mr. Blaine's friends thought for the day that he had obtained control of the letters to prevent their publication, and were inclined to believe that he had committed a very grave blunder.

The sub-committee made a demand upon Mr. Blaine for his letters. He produced in reply the opinion of two distinguished counsel, the one a Republican, the other a Democrat, ex-Judge Black and Hon. Matt. H. Carpenter, that the letters were his own, and that no power could rightfully force him to give them up. The committee did not venture to provoke a contest with him on the legal question, or even to report his refusal to the House, but of course the air was at once filled with the most outrageous slanders as to what the letters contained, and they were made, if possible, to do more mischief by their disappearance than by their unjustifiable production.

It was now the 5th of June, and Mr. Blaine's enemies began to triumph in the hope of his easy defeat at Cincinnati. On that day he electrified his persecutors and the country by producing and reading in the House of Representatives, with scathing comment, the very letters upon which so much reliance had been placed. This has been described as an act of bravado, but no one can

read the faithful report of what he said upon the occasion, dismissing all prejudice from mind, without being impressed with the accent of deep feeling, the heart-beats of a proud and honest man, unfairly driven to bay, which seem to throb in every word. He described the manner in which he had been pursued by "investigations," culminating in the Mulligan episode and its sequel. He said that with due respect to the powers of this House, he defied them to compel him to produce the letters. His right to control his private correspondence was as sacred as his rights over the nurture of his children. But, ready for any extremity of contest or conflict in behalf of so sacred a right, he was not afraid to show the letters. "Thank God Almighty," he cried, "I am not *ashamed* to show them. There they are," brandishing the package in the faces of the astounded Democrats, while the House and the crowded galleries shook with thunders of applause from his excited friends. "There is the very original package. And with some sense of humiliation, with a mortification that I do not pretend to conceal, with a sense of outrage which I think any man in my position would feel, I invite the confidence of forty-four millions of my countrymen while I read those letters from this desk."

It took some time for the officers of the House and the Speaker *pro tempore* (unfortunately the

Speaker, the dignified and respected Michael C. Kerr, was now suffering from the illness which afterward proved fatal), to bring order out of the confusion which ensued. The letters, full of personal matters of Mr. Blaine's business difficulties and other confidential, but never criminating details, were then read by him. It is unnecessary to repeat them here. Fair-minded men have long since agreed in an opinion of their harmlessness. The few sentences in the whole collection which, detached from the context, twisted and perverted by malicious minds and tongues, could bear the slightest evil import, have had the changes rung upon them *ad nauseam*. It must be remembered that these letters were picked out of correspondence extending over fifteen years. "The man did his worst, the very worst he could," as Mr. Blaine justly said, "out of the most intimate business correspondence of my life. I ask, gentlemen, if any of you, and I ask it with some feeling, can stand a severer scrutiny of, or more rigid investigation into your private correspondence? That was the worst he could do."

A still more cutting exposure was in store for the ex-Confederates and their allies. Only one witness was lacking for Mr. Blaine to do what can so seldom be done by the accused, affirmatively prove his innocence. Mr. Josiah Caldwell, who had knowledge of the exact transactions in controversy, was traveling in Europe. Both Mr.

Blaine and the committee were seeking his address, the one to fully vindicate himself, the other in the hope that something damaging might yet be developed. After the reading of the letters was completed, Mr. Blaine turned upon Mr. Knott, the chairman of the Judiciary committee, and demanded whether the committee had sent a despatch to Mr. Caldwell. Mr. Knott faltered: he said, "Judge Hunton and myself have both endeavored to get Mr. Caldwell's address, and have not yet got it."

"Has the gentleman from Kentucky received a despatch from Caldwell?" asked Mr. Blaine, with visibly rising indignation.

"I will explain that directly," replied Mr. Knott.

"I want a categorical answer."

"I have received a dispatch purporting to be from Mr. Caldwell."

"You did?"

"How did you know I got it?" queried Mr. Knott.

"When did you get it?" was the sharp response. "I want the gentleman from Kentucky to answer when he got it."

"Answer my question first."

"I never heard of it until yesterday."

"How did you hear it?"

"I heard you got a despatch last Thursday morning at eight o'clock, from Josiah Caldwell,

completely and absolutely exonerating me from this charge," cried Mr. Blaine, with a blaze of wrath no longer repressed, "and," striding down the aisle and launching the full force of the accusation right in the faces of his would-be persecutors, "YOU HAVE SUPPRESSED IT!"

The mere tone and gesture of the man would have carried away an audience less excited and wrought-up than the one that heard him, or one less devoted to fair play, than an assemblage of so many Americans. Taken altogether, with the whole occasion that had inspired it, and the popularity of the orator who had assumed the aggressive so effectively, the sensation produced was something indescribable. Another wild storm of applause greeted the ex-Speaker.

"I want the gentleman to answer," he persisted, with stern emphasis, and then after an ominous pause. "Does the gentleman from Kentucky decline to answer?"

The Speaker *pro tempore* came to the rescue of his overwhelmed and speechless party associates, with the demand that order be restored and unauthorized persons removed from the floor of the hall.

The contest was then renewed over Mr. Blaine's motion that the suppressed despatch should be brought to light, and should be printed with the volume of the testimony taken by the committee. By every device of parliamentary tactics and

with the strength of their majority, the Democrats fought against this simple measure of justice, and were as firmly withstood by Mr. Blaine, contending almost single-handed for the prompt and timely vindication to which he was entitled. So far did he tower above his petty assailants, and so often did he seem almost to sweep them before him in the torrent of his just resentment, that it will be remembered Mr. John Young Brown, of Kentucky, was led, a few days later, June 9, to rise and inquire in a disgusted tone of the Speaker *pro tem.*:

"I want simply to know whether this is the American Congress——"

"That is what I want to know," interjected Mr. Blaine, with his usual quickness.

"—Or a school in which we are merely pupils of the schoolmaster from Maine?"

"It is the most surprising American Congress that ever assembled," said the "schoolmaster from Maine," in a tone of frank explanation that again evoked the cheers and laughter that relieved the overstrained nerves of the immense audience, in which Mr. Blaine was probably the most self-possessed individual.

The final result of these investigations was a negative instead of an affirmative acquittal of Mr. Blaine. There was a general feeling among men of all parties that it was unfair to drag the private correspondence of any man before the

public, and that if such invasion of personal right were approved by the popular opinion of the country, it would lead to scandals innumerable, which in turn might be followed by tragedies the most deplorable. The American sense of fair play, which is always to be trusted, decided that a public man does not give up his private rights, and that among the most sacred of private rights is that of every man to control his own personal correspondence.

After the Cincinnati Convention the investigations simply died a natural death or were allowed to drop. The public opinion of the country was very decidedly against the whole proceeding, and the Democrats themselves, finding that they had been put into a false position by their leaders, became discontented at the course of Mr. Knott and his associates. The best elements in the party called for a halt in the proceedings.

The result of the combined attempt to put down the people's favorite, and keep him down, would have been a complete failure, except for an occurrence which no one for a moment expected.

On the close and oppressive Sunday before the nominating Convention met, Mr. Blaine, despite the strain to which he had been subjected, and which tested even his remarkable *physique* to the utmost, went, according to his custom, to the Congregational Church, in Washington. The church faces South and in ascending the broad unshaded

steps, in the full beams of an unseasonably torrid sun, Mr. Blaine, without warning, reeled and fell. He was quickly raised and carried back to his home, where he lay insensible, with all that matchless eloquence silenced, that vigor paralyzed, and, to the anxious eyes of friends, his life hanging in the balance during two days, while his rivals did their worst against his prospects at Cincinnati. The Convention was distracted between hopes and fears. Dr. D. W. Bliss (who afterwards attended President Garfield) soon pronounced his distinguished patient out of danger. Other reports were busily spread in the Convention. It was whispered about that even if the prospective standard-bearer escaped death, his mind would never be the same grand organ that it had been, a wholly baseless *canard*, which time has abundantly refuted. Unfortunately it had its effect, in alarming some of the delegates, and though General Logan, who was present from Illinois, generously cried: "We will vote for his corpse if he dies," his friends met with their first great, bitter disappointment. None of his avowed rivals triumphed over the prostrate giant, but the "dark horse" policy resulted in the nomination of Mr. Hayes.

Mr. Blaine received on the first ballot 285 votes, lacking 93 of the nomination. On the seventh ballot his vote rose to 345, or 33 less than a majority. When the news came of the Conven-

tion's choice, he alone of the little group in his sick room, retained perfect composure, and after a slight exclamation of surprise, wrote the proper despatches of congratulation to the candidate, and thanks to his own supporters.

It may be remarked, in passing, that the story that his sun-stroke saved him from further investigation by Congress is cruelly and absurdly false. The investigations had spent themselves, and their promoters had taken care to do all in their power before the Convention met. His sudden attack of vertigo was an unmingled misfortune, first to his physical health at the time, and second to the devoted friends who had set their hearts upon his nomination.

CHAPTER X.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

It is a notable circumstance to which Mr. Blaine has often adverted, that upon first entering Congress he gained, by a series of coincidences, two firm and valued friends, the regard of the three for one another never afterwards suffering diminution or a shadow of change. Upon standing up to be sworn in he found himself side by side with a Mr. Allison of Iowa, and a Mr. Garfield of Ohio, who, like himself, were entering upon a new experience. The three were entire strangers to one another. When the seats came to be drawn they found that they were again thrown in close proximity, almost within arm's length, near the centre aisle. They walked down from the Capitol together, on their way to their respective lodgings on the first day of their service, and if their conversation was not on such lofty themes as the reader might expect from their characters, it was on a topic that led more quickly to intimacy and good-humor—the price and quality of board in over-crowded Washington. All were before many years talked of as Presidential possibilities; one of them filled the high office and perished in it, and

another is now the Republican candidate. This never made them antagonists. On the contrary, the grand qualities they had in common—warm-heartedness, fidelity, trustfulness—drew them ever into firmer alliance, broken only by the sad death of the one, in the chief place in whose cabinet another of the three had been installed.

Nearly all of Mr. Blaine's closer friends were surprised at his decision to accept the office of Secretary of State, and many regretted his conclusion, abandoning, as he did, the brilliant career open to him in the Senate of the United States, where he could have remained, by repeated elections, during the remainder of his life.

It will be remembered that Mr. Garfield visited Washington in November after his election. In a quiet upper room in Mr. Blaine's Fifteenth street house, late in that month, Mr. Garfield and Mr. Blaine breakfasted together, and discussed, long and earnestly, the general situation. Mr. Blaine's family was still absent in New England. At this interview, Mr. Garfield with all the fervor and earnestness peculiar to his nature, tendered to the great Maine commoner the leading place in his cabinet. Mr. Blaine, taken by surprise at this unexpected offer, asked that time be given him for consideration. For nearly three weeks he balanced the subject in his mind, and consulted the few friends who were admitted into the charmed circle of his confidence; and it may here be

recorded, that, almost without exception, they urged him to decline the portfolio of the State Department, and remain in the Senate. The unusual friendship and intimacy which had existed for well nigh twenty years between Garfield and Blaine, their cordial confidence, and their belief in each other's greatness and patriotism, may have had its influence—no doubt did have its influence —in determining Mr. Blaine's decision.

The Secretaryship of State is not an office to be lightly refused, especially when the President of the nation is one who commands the respect and confidence of the whole people, as Mr. Garfield unquestionably did. It should not be forgotten that the office has been filled by the greatest statesmen of the country. Thomas Jefferson was the first appointment; following him was Edmund Randolph, also of Virginia; then came Timothy Pickering, of Massachusetts; then John Marshall, of Virginia; then James Madison, of Virginia; next, another honored Virginian, James Monroe; then John Quincy Adams, then Henry Clay, of Kentucky, who, like Mr. Blaine, was not only a member, but three times Speaker of the House of Representatives, and subsequently a Senator; then Martin Van Buren; then Edward Livingston, Daniel Webster, John C. Calhoun, James Buchanan; again Daniel Webster, Edward Everett, and William L. Marcy, of New York; next came Lewis Cass, of Michigan; then Jeremiah S.

Black, William H. Seward, and those of later date, whose names are familiar to the youngest reader.

Five of the statesmen here mentioned became the Chief Magistrates of the nation. Possibly the contemplation of this long line of distinguished occupants of the office may have had some slight influence on Mr. Blaine's decision. At any rate, he accepted the offer with the same cordiality with which it had been made, and in due time he wrote to President Garfield the letter of acceptance as follows:

"WASHINGTON, D. C., Dec. 20, 1880.

"*My Dear Garfield:*

"Your generous invitation to enter your cabinet as Secretary of State has been under consideration for more than three weeks. The thought had really never occurred to my mind, until at our last conference you presented it with such cogent arguments in its favor, and with such warmth of personal friendship in aid of your offer. I know that an early answer is desirable, and I have waited only long enough to consider the subject in all its bearings, and to make up my mind definitely and conclusively. I now say to you, in the same cordial spirit in which you have invited me, that I accept the position. It is no affectation for me to add that I make this decision, not for the honor of promotion it gives me in public, but because I think I can be useful to the country and to the party; useful to you as the responsible leader of the party, and the great head of the government. I am influenced, somewhat, perhaps, by the shower of letters I have received, urging me to accept, written to me in consequence of the mere unauthorized newspaper report,

that you had been pleased to offer me the place. While I have received these letters from all sections of the Union, I have been especially pleased, and even surprised, at the cordial and widely extended feeling in my favor throughout New England, where I had expected to encounter local jealousy, and, perhaps, rival aspirations. In our new relation, I shall give all that I am, and all that I can hope to be, freely and joyfully to your service. You need no pledges of my loyalty in heart and act. I should be false to myself did I not prove true, both to the great trust you confide to me, and to your own personal and political fortunes in the present and the future.

"Your administration must be made brilliantly successful, and strong in the confidence and pride of the people, not at all directing its energies for re-election, and yet compelling that result by the logic of events, and by the imperious necessities of the situation to that most desirable consummation. I feel, next to yourself, I can possibly contribute as much influence as any other man. I say this not from egotism or vain glory, but merely as a deduction from a plain analysis of the political forces which have been at work in the country for two years past, and which have been significantly shown in two great conventions. I accept it as one of the happiest circumstances connected with this affair, that in allying my political fortunes with yours, or, rather, for the time, merging mine in yours, my heart goes with my head, and that I carry to you, not only political support, but personal and devoted friendship. I can but regard it as somewhat remarkable, that two men of the same age, entering Congress at the same time, influenced by the same aims and cherishing the same principles, should never for a single moment, in our eighteen years of close intimacy, have had a word or coolness, and that our

friendship has steadily grown with our growth and strengthened with our strength. It is this fact that has lead me to the conclusion embodied in this letter, for, however, much, my dear Garfield, I might admire you as a statesman, I would not enter your cabinet if I did not believe in you as a man, and love you as a friend.

"Faithfully yours,

"JAMES G. BLAINE."

The terrible tragedy of that unhappy second day of July, 1880, which is mentioned even now with a shudder, deprived the country at once of a great President and a great Secretary, who, had he remained in office, would undoubtedly have made for himself a name, second to none of those illustrious ones recorded above.

There was a confidence between Mr. Garfield and his chief cabinet adviser, such as rarely exists in official relationship, and nothing annoyed the President more than the attempt to hold Mr. Blaine responsible for every act of the administration. Under date of May 29, 1881, in a letter to a personal friend, in Mr. Garfield's own handwriting, a letter which still exists, he used the following words: "The attempt to shift the fight to Mr. Blaine's shoulders is as weak as it is unjust. The fact is, no member of the cabinet behaves with any more respect to the rights of his brother members than Mr. Blaine. It should be understood that the administration is not meddling with New York State politics; it only defends itself when assailed."

SECRETARY BLAINE AT THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT GARFIELD.

One of the best corrections of the false ideas industriously spread of Mr. Blaine's policy while Secretary of State, in fact the very best, is afforded by a close study of his own words and acts, as opposed to the wild misrepresentations of his traducers. A project which, when it came from his original, inventive mind, attracted most hearty praise from all lovers of America and of peace, has been so industriously ridiculed and belittled since that time, that its grand scope and attractiveness have been almost entirely obscured. This was the so-called Peace Congress, or general convention of delegates from the independent powers on the Western Continent, proposed to be held in the city of Washington, on the 24th day of November, 1882. The primary object, like that of the Congresses held in Europe, was to be the restoration and preservation of peace (war was then raging between Chili and Peru) among the nations of America, but of course there could be no doubt that the meeting face to face of the representatives of so many nations and climes, the free interchange of views, the expressions of the common hopes and aspirations of the New World, would tend to knit closer the ties uniting each to all, and to spread that fruitful conservator of peace, international commerce. How little there was in it of any thoughts of conquest or domination by the United States is witnessed by the form of the letter of invitation, which would

deserve reproduction, if only as a masterly state paper. The following copy was sent to our minister to the Argentine Republic:

"DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

"WASHINGTON, November 29, 1881.

"SIR: The attitude of the United States with respect to the question of general peace on the American continent is well known through its persistent efforts for years past to avert the evils of warfare, or, these efforts failing, to bring positive conflicts to an end through pacific counsels or the advocacy of impartial arbitration.

"This attitude has been consistently maintained, and always with such fairness, as to leave no room for imputing to our government any motive, except the humane and disinterested one of saving the kindred states of the American continent from the burdens of war. The position of the United States as the leading Power of the New World, might well give to its Government a claim to authoritative utterance for the purpose of quieting discord among its neighbors, with all of whom the most friendly relations exist. Nevertheless, the good offices of this government are not, and have not at any time been tendered with a show of dictation or compulsion, but only as exhibiting the solicitous good-will of a common friend.

"For some years past a growing disposition has been manifested by certain States of Central and South America to refer disputes affecting grave questions of international relationship and boundaries to arbitration rather than to the sword. It has been on several such occasions a source of profound satisfaction to the Government of the United States to see that this country is in a large measure looked to by all the American Powers as their friend

and mediator. The just and impartial counsel of the President in such cases has never been withheld, and his efforts have been rewarded by the prevention of sanguinary strife or angry contention between peoples whom we regard as brethren.

"The existence of this growing tendency convinces the President that the time is ripe for a proposal that shall enlist the good will and active co-operation of all the States of the Western Hemisphere, both North and South, in the interest of humanity and for the common weal of Nations. He conceives that none of the Governments of America can be less alive than our own to the dangers and horrors of a state of war, and especially of war between kinsmen. He is sure that none of the chiefs of Governments on the continent can be less sensitive than he is to the sacred duty of making every endeavor to do away with the chances of fratricidal strife. And he looks with hopeful confidence to such active assistance from them as will serve to show the broadness of our common humanity, and the strength of the ties which bind us all together as a great and harmonious system of American commonwealths.

"Impressed by these views, the President extends to all the independent countries of North and South America an earnest invitation to participate in a general Congress, to be held in the city of Washington, on the 24th day of November, 1882, for the purpose of considering and discussing the methods of preventing war between the Nations of America. He desires that the attention of the Congress shall be strictly confined to this one great object; that its sole aim shall be to seek a way of permanently averting the horrors of cruel and bloody combat between countries, oftenest of one blood and speech, or the even worse calamity of internal commotion and civil

strife; that it shall regard the burdensome and far-reaching consequences of such struggles, the legacies of exhausted finances, of oppressive debt, of onerous taxation, of ruined cities, of paralyzed industries, of devastated fields, of ruthless conscription, of the slaughter of men, of the grief of the widow and the orphan, of embittered resentments that long survive those who provoked them, and heavily afflict the innocent generations that come after.

"The President is especially desirous to have it understood that, in putting forth this invitation the United States does not assume the position of counselling, or attempting, through the voice of the Congress, to counsel, any determinate solution of existing questions which may now divide any of the countries of America. Such questions cannot properly come before the Congress. Its mission is higher. It is to provide for the interests of all in the future, not to settle the individual differences of the present. For this reason especially the President has indicated a day for the assembling of the Congress so far in the future as to have good ground for hope that by the the time named the present situation on the South Pacific Coast will be happily terminated, and that those engaged in the contest may take peaceable part in the discussion and solution of the general question affecting in an equal degree the well-being of all.

"It seems also desirable to disclaim in advance any purpose on the part of the United States to prejudge the issues to be presented to the Congress. It is far from the intent of this Government to appear before the Congress as in any sense the Protector of its neighbors or the predestined and necessary arbitrator of their disputes. The United States will enter into the deliberations of the Congress on the same footing as the other Powers repre-

sented, and with the loyal determination to approach any proposed solution, not merely in its own interest, or with a view to asserting its own power, but as a single member among many co-ordinate and co-equal States. So far as the influence of this Government may be potential, it will be exerted in the direction of conciliating whatever conflicting interests of blood, or government or historical traditions may necessarily come together in response to a call embracing such vast and diverse elements.

"You will present these views to the minister of Foreign Relations of the Argentine Republic, enlarging, if need be, in such terms as will readily occur to you, upon the great mission which it is within the power of the proposed Congress to accomplish in the interest of humanity, and upon the firm purpose of the United States to maintain a position of the most absolute and impartial friendship toward all. You will thereupon, in the name of the President of the United States, tender to His Excellency, the President of the Argentine Republic, a formal invitation to send two commissioners to the Congress, provided with such powers on behalf of their Government as will enable them to consider the questions brought before that body within the limit of submission contemplated by this invitation. The United States, as well as the other Powers, will, in like manner, be represented by two commissioners, so that equality and impartiality will be amply secured in the proceedings of the Congress.

"In delivering this invitation through the minister of Foreign Affairs, you will read this despatch to him and leave with him a copy, intimating that an answer is desired by this Government as promptly as the just consideration of so important a proposition will permit.

"I am, etc., JAMES G. BLAINE."

After this, the reader is better prepared to judge of Mr. Blaine's "dangerous diplomacy," and the extent of his desire for a foreign war.

The invitation, it is well known, was canceled and recalled after Mr. Blaine left the Cabinet, and it was perhaps as well that the plan which he had conceived should be left unexecuted, rather than tried abortively, without his presence and counsel to carry it to the full success for which he had hoped.

Mr. Blaine's term as Secretary of State was brief indeed, but more crowded with events and distractions of the most trying nature than that of any of his predecessors except, perhaps, Mr. Seward. He could scarcely have been censured if the terrible event of which he was an eye-witness, and the distressing summer which followed, had paralyzed his energies and made his public record blank. Yet it might almost be said, that one reading only the public record of that year would never imagine that the Secretary of State had been obliged to mourn the sufferings and death of his cherished friend, the Chief Magistrate, and turn from the funeral ceremonies to assist in starting a new and untried Administration upon its way.

No one can exaggerate what Mr. Blaine was to President Garfield, and to the country, through the "terrible months," July, August and September, 1881, and it would not be possible to

describe it fully. He stood between the two as the balance-wheel, if not the source of power, and saw to all emergencies, from the surroundings of the sick room to the meetings of the Cabinet. Few can have forgotten how he scattered the fogs, raised by the solemn muddle of medical terms in the bulletins, issued by the physicians, under the direction of Dr. Bliss, and how he bravely prepared the public mind for the worst, in his despatch to Minister Lowell in London, August 22d, at 11 P. M. That despatch contained the first truth that had been given to the public since the fatal shot was fired. It was like the flying open of a lantern on a dark and, alas! a hopeless night. With his nervous, strenuous way of stating facts, the Secretary referred briefly to the liquid food which the patient had been able to take that day, and continued: "But his general condition is serious, if not critical." The doctors had darkened counsel with words, and even resorted to prevarication,—of course, "professionally." Mr. Blaine spoke plain English about what he thought the world ought to know. "He is very weak, exhausted and emaciated, not weighing over 125 or 130 pounds. His weight when wounded was from 205 to 210 pounds. His failure to regain strength is the one feature which gives special uneasiness and apprehension." After this presentation of vital facts, no person of sense was in danger of being taken by surprise when the worst occurred,

and the physicians' bulletins were thereafter discredited in waiting for what Mr. Blaine might say.

One of the most urgent questions which Mr. Blaine encountered, in our foreign relations, was that of the inter-oceanic canals, proposed in Central America. On the 24th of June he issued a circular-letter to our representatives abroad, setting forth the settled objection of this Government to any concerted action of the European powers, for the purpose of guaranteeing the neutrality of such a canal, or determining the condition of its use, and furthermore calling attention to the paramount right and duty in this particular imposed on the United States by its treaty with the former Republic of New Granada,—now Columbia,—signed in 1846.

The tragedy of the 2d of July postponed further action, but on the 19th of November Mr. Blaine addressed to Mr. Lowell a letter, which awakened wide attention, instructing him to apply to the British Government for its consent to the mutual abrogation of certain clauses in the Clayton Bulwer treaty of April 19, 1850, which had become harmful and inappropriate in the time since elapsed. This treaty, as Mr. Blaine showed, virtually concedes to Great Britain the control of any inter-oceanic canal that may be constructed in Nicaragua, because, when it prohibits any fortifications commanding the canal, or the use of military forces by land, it does not prohibit

any naval force (in which arm Great Britain possesses such preponderance), from coming near enough to dominate or be ready to seize the canal. He then pointed out that merely to hold the distant dependency of India, Great Britain had established a belt of posts half way round the globe,—Gibraltar, Malta, and Cyprus, in the Mediterranean; Egypt, Aden, and the island of Perim, which makes the Red Sea *mare clausum*. "It would," he said, "in the judgment of the President, be no more unreasonable for the United States to demand a share in these fortifications, or their absolute neutralization, than for England to make the same demand in perpetuity from the United States with respect to the transit across the American continent." This point he illustrated, with great force and cogency, and then went on to speak of the canal under way at Panama, under French auspices. If the Clayton-Bulwer treaty applies to this, he said, then while Great Britain and the United States "each remains bound to the other in common helplessness, a third power, or a fourth, or a combination of many, may step in and give direction to the project which the Bulwer-Clayton treaty assumed to be under the sole control of the two English-speaking nations." He referred to the fact, that in 1850 help was expected from British capital in the construction of a Nicaragua canal, an expectation that had not been realized, and which had

now lost all importance. For these, and the other reasons set forth in the letter, Mr. Blaine suggested the following principal changes in the treaty:

"*First.* Every part of the treaty which forbids the United States fortifying the canal and holding the political control of it in conjunction with the country in which it is located to be canceled.

"*Second.* Every part of the treaty in which Great Britain and the United States agree to make no acquisition of territory in Central America to remain in full force. * * * The acquisition of military and naval stations necessary for the protection of the canal, and voluntarily ceded to the United States by the Central American States, is not to be regarded as a violation of the provision contained in the foregoing.

"*Third.* The United States will not object to maintaining the clause looking to the establishment of a free port at each end of whatever canal may be constructed, if England desires it to be retained."

The fourth and fifth suggestions referring respectively to the obsolete clause covering the Panama and Tehuantepec railway, and the incomplete clause intended to govern the distance from the mouths of the canal where captures might be made in time of war, were of less importance. Mr. Blaine concluded with an earnest expression of the respect of the United States for all the

rights of even its smallest neighbors on this continent, but its unalterable objection to the meddling of European powers in the isthmus canal question. "It is the fixed purpose of the United States to confine it strictly and solely as an American question, to be dealt with and decided by the American Government." He added, that the present was thought as an opportunity for the readjustment of all difficulties, because at no time, since the peace of 1783, had the relations between the two Governments been so cordial and friendly.

About a week later, Lord Granville's deferred reply to the circular-letter of June came to hand. It was brief and non-committal, but as Mr. Blaine had already anticipated it asserted "that the position of Great Britain and the United States with reference to the canal, irrespective of the magnitude of the commercial relations of the former power with countries to and from which, if completed, it will form the highway, is determined by the engagements entered into by them respectively in the convention, which was signed at Washington on the 19th of April, 1850, commonly known as the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, and Her Majesty's Government rely with confidence upon the observance of all the engagements of that treaty."

This gave Mr. Blaine opportunity for a rejoinder which must be regarded as one of his ablest compositions. In a letter to Mr. Lowell,

covering but a few pages of the diplomatic reports, he rapidly piled up, in convincing array, the historical facts which showed that the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty could by no possibility be regarded as the final word in the isthmus canal debate, but that it had, if anything, added to the causes of difference by its vagueness of expression and the numerous topics which it introduced only to leave them at loose ends. He showed that in a short time after its adoption, the British Government itself proposed the extreme measure of referring the doubtful clauses to a friendly power for arbitration. Six years later the pretensions of the British Government over parts of Nicaragua and the coast islands, led to the attempt to reconcile the differences of opinion by the Clarendon-Dallas Treaty of 1856, which was never ratified.

After this, President Buchanan and Secretary Cass, pressed in the strongest terms for the abrogation of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, and were met by the British Goverment with the renewed proposal to refer it to arbitration. To this the American reply was, that it would be absurd to refer a question of the interpretation of the English language, arising between two powers who possessed it in common, to a third power, having a different vernacular. When Lord Malmesbury succeeded Lord Clarendon in the foreign office, he frankly confessed to Lord Napier, the minister at Washington, that the treaty had been "a source

of increasing embarrassment" to both countries, but by this time, Sir William Ouseley was on his way to Central America to negotiate treaties with some of the States there, and as the Clayton-Bulwer compact did, after all, restrain British acquisitiveness to a certain extent, General Cass cautiously refrained from proposing its abrogation at that time. This kind of triple deadlock, therefore, resulted in nothing but increasing the chronic discontent of both nations with their mutual obligations. "It will be seen," said Mr. Blaine, in closing up, "that from the time of its conclusion in 1850 until the end of 1858, its provisions were thrice made the basis of a proposal to arbitrate as to their meaning, that modification and abrogation have been alike contingently considered, and that its vexations and imperfect character has been repeatedly recognized on both sides. The present proposal of this government is to free it from those embarrassing features, and leave it, as its framers intended it should be, a full and perfect settlement, for all time, of all possible issues between the United States and Great Britain with regard to Central America."

While Mr. Blaine was thus vindicating the *hegemony*, as Dr. Liebir called it, or leadership of the United States among the States of North and Central America, and carrying on at the same time an earnest correspondence in regard to the treaty rights of American fishermen in

Canadian waters, he was called upon to face a still greater responsibility in our South American relations. The fierce war between Chili and the allied powers of Peru and Bolivia, which he more than suspected had been stirred up by designing influences emanating from Europe, had taken more and more the form of a struggle for commercial supremacy, in which Chili, backed by English, and possibly by German, secret aid, had completely overthrown Peru, and by keeping that country in anarchy, was preparing to rob her of all her sources of wealth and leave almost an ungoverned desert. Equally friendly to both republics, the United States could not but view this deplorable condition of affairs with the gravest concern. While Peru was in danger of relapsing almost into barbarism, Chili was ambitiously seizing more territory than her slender resources could really assimilate, all progress on the Pacific coast of South America was likely to be retarded, the interests of the United States were ignored, and no class was gaining but selfish traders and speculators from the Old World. At the same time the regard which the Colossus of the North was bound to show toward the independence and free action of the weaker republics made the task of negotiation or interference a very delicate one.

Mr. Blaine was not favored in his work by the assistance of a skilled diplomatic corps. Mr.

Hurlbut had been sent to Peru and Mr. Kilpatrick to Chili, rather in consideration of their services as generals in the army than on account of fitness for diplomacy. The latter was in declining health, and was married to a devoted Chilian lady, which could not but tend to distract his sympathies to a greater or less extent. Mr. Blaine had almost as much trouble in controlling his own ministers in these remote regions, treating with the excited belligerents, and his confidential despatches were often in terms of sharp reproof. Finally he adopted the course of sending Mr. William Henry Trescott, a gentleman of most thorough experience in Spanish-American affairs, accompanied by Mr. Walker Blaine, the Third Assistant Secretary of State, and a gentleman of rare learning and sagacity, as a special mission to offer the friendly services of the United States in negotiating a humane and beneficial peace. These envoys persevered in their work under almost unparalleled difficulties until it was frustrated, like the Peace Congress and other salutary plans, by the change in the headship of the State Department at home.

Still another disturbing element was added by the desperate efforts of certain American and other speculators to force the recognition of the enormous demands upon Peru, known as the Cochet and Landreau claims, for the discovery of the commercial value of the guano and nitrate

deposits in that country, extending in amount to hundreds of millions of dollars. Mr. Blaine, like Mr. Evarts before him, gave these claims simply the formal consideration to which they were entitled, and directed them to be examined by the proper officers, but their attorney, a Mr. Shipherd, seized upon this as a full endorsement of their validity, and commenced an extraordinary and voluminous correspondence with the Department of State, and still more improperly with Minister Hurlbut, in which he assumed that the United States government and its officers were in partnership with him in a tremendous speculation, and that all were to profit by it financially. Mr. Blaine telegraphed peremptorily to Mr. Hurlbut to give no countenance to the scheme, and the latter forwarded to the Department all the letters with which he had been bombarded. Upon examining them, Mr. Blaine wrote to the visionary lawyer in New York in very unmistakeable language, informing him that he was disbarred from practice before the State Department, and that the only reason he was not prosecuted for attempted bribery was the probability that he was not fully accountable for his language and actions.

Shipherd, in his rage, flew to Congress for that ready means of revenge an "investigation," and after accusing Mr. Blaine of "neglecting American interests abroad" changed the charge to one of the same offense which he had attempted to com-

mit—official corruption. A young Democratic member from New York, saw a chance to achieve notoriety, at least, by assailing Mr. Blaine, so that for a fourth or fifth time the latter encountered his old friend, a bitterly partisan "smelling committee," as they are expressively called. His two chief witnesses were dead, Mr. Kilpatrick and Mr. Hurlbut. The archives of the State Department, with a mass of obscure and unexplained papers, were flung open against him with a surprising disregard of the most ordinary diplomatic reserve, and he was only a private citizen contending against those in power; but again his vindication was triumphant and complete. The committee dropped its futile labors in disgust. Yet to this day the lies are industriously repeated that Mr. Blaine, as Secretary of State, "adopted a blustering tone toward England;" "tried to involve the country in war," and "pressed a guano claim against Peru," when a mere reading of the published documents of his term would show the exact contrary in every particular. If necessary, reference might be made in this connection to the repeated instances in his official letters where he calls attention to the undefended and unwarlike posture of this country, and its aversion to war. Thus in his circular of June 24, 1881, he says to all our representatives abroad:

"The policy of the United States is one of peace

and friendly intercourse with every government and people. This disposition is frankly avowed, and is, moreover, abundantly shown in the fact that our armaments by land and sea are kept within such limits as to afford no ground for distrust or suspicion of menace to other nations. The guarantee entered into by this government in 1846 was manifestly in the interest of peace, and the necessity imposed by circumstances upon the United States of America to watch over a highway between its two coasts was so imperative that the resultant guarantee was the simplest justice to the chief interests concerned. Any attempt to supersede that guarantee by an agreement between European powers, which maintain vast armies, and patrol the sea with immense fleets, and whose interest in the canal and its operation can never be so vital and supreme as ours, would partake of the nature of an alliance against the United States, and would be regarded by this government as an indication of unfriendly feeling. It would be but an inadequate response to the good will we bear them, and to our cheerful and constant recognition of their own rights of domestic policy, as well as those resulting from proximity or springing from neighborly interest."

And, in the ensuing letter, although he says: "The military power of the United States, as shown by the recent civil war, is without limit,

and, in any conflict on the American continent, altogether irresistible," he is quick to add that the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, by excluding land forces, surrenders the inter-oceanic canal "to the guardianship and control of the British navy."

Notwithstanding his remarkable command of legal questions, which enabled him so efficiently to fill the highest place in the national cabinet, yet Mr. Blaine is not a lawyer. Plain people who remember the superabundance of lawyers in public life will not be apt to regret this fact. He studied for the profession two years, but did not enter upon its practice. This was never made a reproach to him until he entered the Senate and encountered the many legal luminaries there. They seemed to think that he was *ipso facto*, as they would say, disbarred from discussing any legal point with them, and tried to dismiss his arguments with the sneer "if the Senator were a lawyer—but he is not," and so on. They soon found that the ex-journalist and schoolmaster had a firm hold on the very essence of the law, sound common sense, and this, with his accurate knowledge of facts often made havoc of their easy confidence in their professional acquirements. Finally, in the great debate on the distribution of the Geneva award, Mr. Blaine encountered the late Matthew Hale Carpenter, and the other giants of legal lore in the Senate, and fairly vanquished them all in a stand-up fight upon their own ground

and with their own weapons. After this there was no attempt to designate him as a layman or an ignoramus and he was heard as respectfully and attentively as any lawyer among them.

Mr. Blaine could have become a notable jurist and advocate, and from his quick, impartial rulings as Speaker it is easy to see that he would have been eminent as a judge if his tastes had led him in that direction. All his powers found full scope, however, in the various spheres to which he was called, and in none more so than when Secretary of State under the trying ordeals through which he then passed. As Chief Magistrate of the nation, he would be altogether at home.

CHAPTER XI.

MR. BLAINE'S HOMES.

THERE is a natural curiosity to know about the houses and homes of eminent men, for the home is generally the outgrowth of the tastes, character and disposition of the individual, and speaks of him almost as unmistakably as the sea-shell speaks of the creature around which it grew.

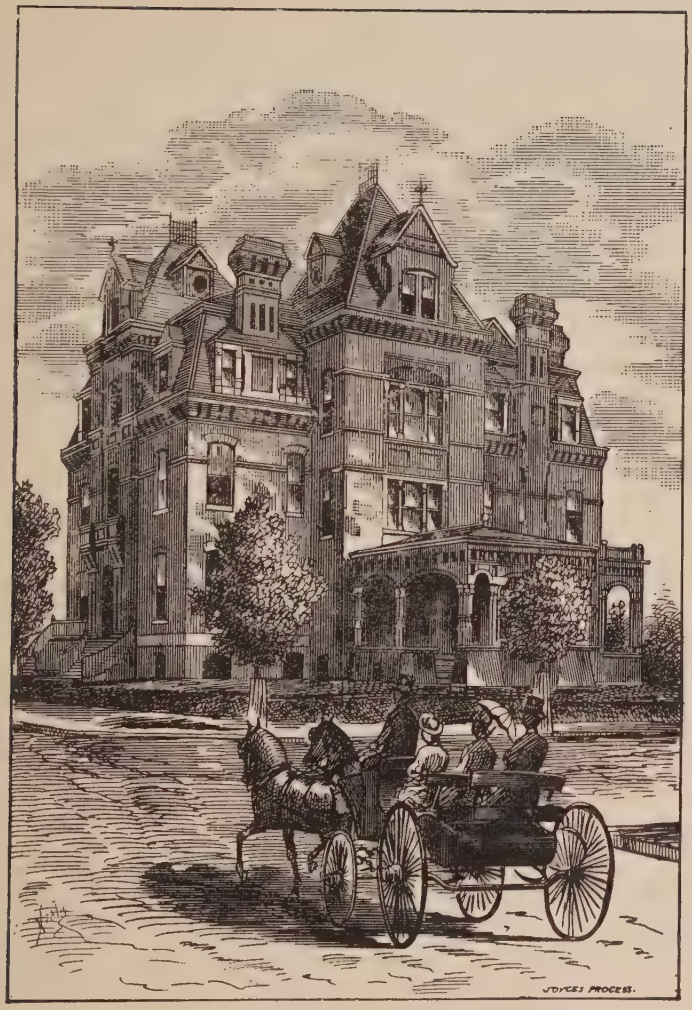
In the city of Washington during over twenty years' service there, Mr. Blaine has most of the time lived in the manner sanctioned by the example of St. Paul, in Rome; but about five years ago, feeling able to indulge his tastes in that direction, he determined upon the erection of a dwelling which should suit his own ideas. With his usual prudence he chose a lot on the extreme verge of the West End, which did credit to his judgment as an investor. It was the former site of a brickyard, and forlorn-looking to the last degree, but Mr. Blaine saw that it was on high ground, that it commanded a fine prospect in every direction, that it fronted on what is now called Dupont Circle, which will soon be one of the finest parks in the city, and that it had a small

reservation in front giving somewhat the effect of large private grounds. The fashionable quarter was also extending in that direction, a process likely to be hastened by the removal thither of one in Mr. Blaine's station.

The converging of P street and Massachusetts avenue toward the Circle, made the lot a truncated angle, and on this the house is erected, open to the sun and air on all sides. It is familiar to those who have visited Washington, being pointed out as one of the prominent landmarks, not on account of its intrinsic costliness, in which it is surpassed by others in the neighborhood, but on account of its well-chosen site, the good taste displayed and, in short, because it is Mr. Blaine's.

The materials are modest brick and brown stone, combined so as to produce a rich and harmonious effect. Having a large family and a dislike for anything like crowding, Mr. Blaine made it probably the most spacious private residence in the District, unless the legation building supplied by the British Government to its representative can be included under that head. It also appears that he likes plenty of light, for the number of wide window openings, filled only with broad sheets of plate glass, sixty-four in all, it is stated, attracted some wonderment at the time.

On the eastern, or Twentieth street front, is the main entrance, up a double flight of stone steps



HON. JAMES G. BLAINE'S RESIDENCE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

with polished brass railings. On the North side is an ample *porte cochere*, above which is a large stained glass window, lighting the staircase within. On the west front is a wide piazza, commanding the gorgeous sunsets known to this latitude.

The main hall might be called baronial in its dimensions. It has panelings and ceilings of oak, the latter supported on polished oak columns with richly-carved capitals. The stairs are massively built in oak, decorated with carvings, and the whole is set off by the great fire-place which fronts the visitor as he enters, and gives a home-like glow to the scene.

To the right is a small reception-room, and to the left the large parlors and drawing-room. In the rear is the library, opening on the piazza before mentioned. It is finished in mahogany, and the shelves are filled with books in handsome bindings, the treasured companions of Mr. Blaine's leisure and the instruments of his studies and literary toil.

On the other side of the hall is the dining-room, also finished in mahogany. All these apartments are appropriately but not extravagantly furnished, in a manner bespeaking rather quiet good taste than love of display.

To this house Mr. Blaine removed with his family from his Fifteenth-street house, near McPherson square, which he had occupied during

the Speakership. It did not give him the satisfaction he had expected. His retirement from public life after the death of Garfield, and his absorption in the researches necessary for writing "Twenty Years of Congress," made the big house an unnecessary care and burden. The only festivity which took place in it during his occupancy was the marriage of his eldest daughter to Major Coppinger of the regular Army, an event which still further diminished his household, one son being engaged in business in the West, while two children were at school.

All things considered, Mr. Blaine gave up without much regret his "house beautiful," which required a large staff of servants and constant supervision, and returned to the condition of tenant in a brown-stone front on Lafayette square, a quiet, but aristocratic nook, just south of the Decatur mansion, and within a stone's throw of Mr. Corcoran's, the venerable George Bancroft's, the White House, and other notable structures.

His practical wisdom was shown in the ease with which he secured for the house he had built a very remunerative rental from a Chicago millionaire, with ample means and inclination for the social entertaining to which it is so well adapted.

Yet it is not in any of the four or five houses he has occupied in Washington, that Mr. Blaine has ever felt so truly at home as in the big, rambling, yet not unsightly structure at Augusta,

RESIDENCE OF HON. JAMES G. BLAINE AT AUGUSTA, ME.

Maine, which has been his for about thirty years, and which he has improved, modified and added to just as his circumstances permitted or required. It stands almost alone in one of the large city blocks of Augusta, across the street from the old State House, with a wide lawn at the side, shaded by noble old trees, and surrounded by the flower and vegetable gardens, stables and outhouses.

The original house is plain and square in the New England style, divided by the hallway in the middle. Back of this on one side is an addition containing Mr. Blaine's office, which can be seen at a glance on entering, to be a work-room, so full is it of books, documents, and conveniences for rapid writing and easy reference. Among the ornaments is the ivory gavel which he wielded so admirably for six years as Speaker, now swung on silken ribbons in honorable repose. A bust of Abraham Lincoln surmounts one of the book-cases, and busts and portraits of other noted friends are placed about. In the other direction, another annex, almost if not quite as large as the original structure, has grown up; another air of the whole is that of ample space as well as coziness. So indeed it proves, for the house is comfortable both winter and summer, and furnished with every device which ingenuity can suggest. His townspeople are always glad to have their distinguished citizen among them, and he is always glad to be there.

CHAPTER XII.

SEEN BY ENGLISH EYES.

In the *London World* of July 13th, 1881, Mr. Blaine is described by an English journalist. The article is one of a series on "Celebrities at Home." It describes the home Mr. Blaine then occupied, and gives the features of an interview with him there, he then being Secretary of State. The article, omitting certain portions merely biographical, is here given:

"In one of a group of four tall houses, built of brown stone and red brick, situated in Fifteenth Street, Washington, and bearing the number 821, dwells the American Secretary of State. With the assurance of meeting with the kindest welcome from a statesman universally known for his hospitality and his amiability, and of being entertained with his charming conversation for a few minutes, if the pressing morning duties of the Premier will at all permit it, we stroll along the quiet street, and, arriving at the neat doorstep, pull the bell at Mr. Blaine's. Our cards are taken by a young negress, who, in English undefiled by

the slave's jargon of the Southern plantation, makes the usual cautious remark that she does not know if Mr. Blaine is at home. Four large rooms constitute the drawing-room suite, the ground floor, at Mr. Blaine's. A bow-window on the street adds to the size of the rooms, and affords further scope for the loving ornamentation with which each of these apartments is endowed. There are many valuable objects here; much rare china on the walls and in cabinets; fine pictures; some good statuary; but the greatest charm of the place is its home-like spirit, which enters the heart of the visitor, and tells him that the Premier and his family specially inhabit these rooms, and keep no corner of their house sacred to the cold, perfunctory ceremony of merely receiving visitors.

"Mr. Secretary Blaine's house is incontestably the most popular in Washington. On Wednesday afternoons—the days in Washington when, during the Session of Congress, the wives of Cabinet Ministers and those of foreign Ambassadors receive—there is no house in the American capital so crowded. Whatever the weather, however thin the attendance in other drawing-rooms, there is always a throng at Mr. Blaine's. Nor is this due to the importance of his present position as Secretary of State. It was the same when he was in Congress, whether as a member or Speaker of the House; it was the same when he was in

the Senate; it would be the same if Mr. Blaine were not in politics.

"People go there because they like Mr. Blaine and all his family, which consists of his intellectual and ladylike wife—a kinswoman of brilliant reputation in American letters, who uses the *nom de plume* of 'Gail Hamilton;' and six fine and promising children. Never since the days of the silver-voiced Henry Clay, of Kentucky, has there been a man in the United States whose personal magnetism has been acknowledged to be so potent as that of Mr. Blaine. The power which Mr. Blaine exercises over men, the unfailing success he enjoys in winning their affection, has been variously attributed to his epigrammatic speech, his delightful jocularity, to his earnest face and his splendid physique. But there is a more simple explanation.

"Mr. Blaine's universal popularity is directly derived from the sweet and unaffected nature of the man, and from the unchanging goodness of his big, warm heart. To be a great statesman, and yet a kind, generous, and sympathizing friend to uncountable scores of little people whose acquaintance he has made during the last twenty or thirty years of his life; to maintain a demeanor of perfect dignity at all times, and yet to know how to unbend to each visitor in just the degree necessary to make the latter feel that of all 'good fellows' in the world, 'Blaine of Maine' is the

best, demands intellectual talents and moral qualities of the highest order. These talents and these qualities are well known to be the attributes of Mr. Blaine; and they are not denied him even by those whose interests in the political arena are arrayed against his own.

"In the examination of the drawing-rooms at Mr. Blaine's we find, among other valuable possessions, one very interesting picture—a large canvas by Sir Peter Lely, representing Charles II. and his Court. It is signed, with the date 1658. It was painted by Sir Peter for Lord Baltimore, and was bought by Mr. Blaine for a sum of comparative unimportance at the sale of the Calvert estate, Riverdale, Maryland, a few years ago. There is not an art-gallery in Europe, public or private, which would not be enriched by this large historical picture, full of portraits, and executed in Lely's most delicate and yet most animated style.

"Near at hand, on a rich pedestal, stands a fine life-size bust of Mr. Blaine, as good a likeness of the statesman as could perhaps be obtained in this form of a man, the charm of whose features lies principally in their mobility and ever-changing play. Portraits of men of letters abound here. Dickens, Thackeray, Disraeli, Washington Irving, Hawthorne, and many others gaze down from the walls, principally in the last of the suite of drawing-rooms—the one in which the Premier sits of a

morning before going to the Department of State, examining such letters as imperatively demand his attention at home. Routine correspondence is carried on by secretaries in a vast room at the top of the house, and is an enormous task.

"Listen! A deep mellow voice is warmly crying out, 'Now, is there anything more annoying than to be kept waiting?' To which we reply, with truth, 'It is not annoying with the prospect in view of seeing you.' Blaine of Maine acknowledges the compliment by a hearty grasp from both his extended hands. It is impossible to exaggerate the charm of his manner, because with his own great brilliancy he has a sort of delightful and modest deference to the opinion of his listener, as though to say, 'Am I right? Does your judgment approve of this?' which, it is needless to say, is most 'taking' with every auditor. And there is nothing false here. It is the natural idiosyncrasy of a frank and impulsive man, with a very warm heart, kindly instincts, and generous nature. In stature Mr. Blaine is above the medium height, and is of strong and compactly-built frame. His head is large, his hair gray and abundant; his face is engaging in expression, large in feature, and lighted by a pair of brilliant dark-brown eyes. His movements are alert and vigorous, save when he is in the inquisitorial tortures of an inherited enemy—the gout. 'I suffer vicariously from the gout,' he explains, with a

rueful grimace. 'I never earned the gout. I never drank a glass of spirits in my life. Yet I must endure the agonies of the gout, because my jolly old British ancestors denied themselves nothing.' These ancestors were of that excellent mingling known as the Scotch-Irish."

This picture, added to that describing his new house in Washington and his old home in Augusta, will show the surroundings amid which Mr. Blaine dwells.

CHAPTER XIII.

KEENNESS OF PERCEPTION.

To a degree seldom equalled, Mr. Blaine possesses the ability to look into the most obscure subjects and to penetrate the most effective disguises, so as to see clearly all that lies beneath. Rare indeed would be the measure or the man which could contain or favor a latent fraud and yet escape his searching scrutiny and his unsparing exposures. This capacity is not that microscopic ability which even small men possess in some instances, enabling them to discover every mote in a brother's eye and every unsavory fly in the pot of fragrant ointment. It is telescopic rather; looking beyond the conspicuous planets and stars, and resolving into absolute distinctness the cloudlike, mysterious whiteness of the celestial nebulæ.

In April, 1879, the Democratic members pushed forward what seemed to be an unimportant and unobjectionable proposal to strike eight words from an existing section of the laws regulating the Army of the United States. But behind this unpretentious proposal, there was a world of import unseen by most men. To uncover this,

Mr. Blaine addressed the Senate. He said: "Mr. PRESIDENT: The existing section of the Revised Statutes numbered 2002 reads thus:

"'No military or naval officer, or other persons engaged in the civil, military or naval service of the United States, shall order, bring, keep or have under his authority or control, any troops or armed men at the place where any general or special election is held in any State, unless it be necessary to repel the armed enemies of the United States, or to keep the peace at the polls.'

"The object of the proposed section, which has just been read at the Clerk's desk, is to get rid of the eight closing words, namely, 'or to keep the peace at the polls,' and therefore the mode of legislation proposed in the Army bill now before the Senate is an unusual mode; it is an extraordinary mode. If you want to take off a single sentence at the end of a section in the Revised Statutes, the ordinary way is to strike off those words, but the mode chosen in this bill is to repeat and re-enact the whole section leaving those few words out. While I do not wish to be needlessly suspicious on a small point, I am quite persuaded that this did not happen by accident, but that it came by design. If I may so speak, it came of cunning, the intent being to create the impression that whereas the Republicans in the administration of the General Government had been using troops, right and left, hither and thither, in every direction, as soon as the Democrats got power they

enacted this section. I can imagine Democratic candidates for Congress, all over the country, reading this section to gaping and listening audiences as one of the first offsprings of Democratic reform, whereas every word of it, every syllable of it, from its first to its last, is the enactment of a Republican Congress.

"I repeat that this unusual form presents a dishonest issue, whether so intended or not. It presents the issue that as soon as the Democrats got possession of the Federal Government they proceeded to enact the clause which is thus expressed. The law was passed by a Republican Congress in 1865. There were forty-six Senators sitting in this Chamber at the time, of whom only ten, or at most eleven, were Democrats. The House of Representatives was overwhelmingly Republican. We were in the midst of a war. The Republican administration had a million or possibly twelve hundred thousand bayonets at its command. Thus circumstanced and thus surrounded, with the amplest possible power to interfere with elections had they so designed, with soldiers in every hamlet and county in the United States, the Republican party themselves placed that provision on the statute-book, and Abraham Lincoln, the President, signed it.

"I beg you to observe, Mr. President, that this is the first instance in the legislation of the United States in which any restrictive clause whatever

was put upon the statute-book in regard to the use of troops at the polls. The Republican party did it with the Senate and the House in their control. Abraham Lincoln signed it when he was Commander-in-Chief of an army larger than ever Napoleon Bonaparte had at his command. So much by way of correcting an ingenious and studied attempt at misrepresentation.

"The alleged object is to strike out the few words that authorize the use of troops to keep peace at the polls. This country has been alarmed, I rather think, indeed, amused, at the great effort made to create a widespread impression that the Republican party relies for its popular strength upon the use of the bayonet. This Democratic Congress has attempted to give a bad name to this country throughout the civilized world, and to give it on a false issue. They have raised an issue that has no foundation in fact—that is false in whole and detail, false in the charge, false in all the specifications. That impression sought to be created, as I say, not only throughout the North American continent, but in Europe to-day, is that elections are attempted in this country to be controlled by the bayonet.

"I denounce it here as a false issue. I am not at liberty to say that any gentleman making the issue knows it to be false; I hope he does not; but I am going to prove to him that it is false, and there is not a solitary inch of solid earth on which

to rest the foot of any man that makes that issue."

Mr. Blaine then gave the location of all the armed forces of the Union in a most entertaining and mirth-provoking manner. "I believe," said he, "the Senator from Delaware is alarmed, greatly alarmed, about the over-riding of the popular ballot by troops of the United States! In Delaware there is not a single armed man, not one. The United States has not even one soldier in the State.

"The honorable Senator from West Virginia [Mr. HEREFORD] on Friday last lashed himself into a passion, or at least into a perspiration, over the wrongs of his State, trodden down by the iron heel of military despotism. There is not a solitary man of the United States uniformed on the soil of West Virginia, and there has not been for years.

"In Maryland. I do not know whether my esteemed friend from Maryland [Mr. WHYTE] has been greatly alarmed or not; but at Fort McHenry, guarding the entrance to the beautiful harbor of his beautiful city, there are one hundred and ninety-two artillerymen located.

"In Virginia there is a school of practice at Fortress Monroe. My honorable friend who has charge of this bill [Mr. WITHERS] knows very well, and if he does not I will tell him, that outside of that school of practice at Fortress Monroe,

which has two hundred and eighty-two men in it, there is not a Federal soldier on the soil of Virginia—not one.

"North Carolina. Are the Senators from that State alarmed at the immediate and terrible prospect of being overrun by the Army of the United States? On the whole soil of North Carolina there are but thirty soldiers guarding a fort at the mouth of Cape Fear River—just thirty.

"South Carolina. I do not see a Senator on the floor from that State. There are one hundred and twenty artillerymen guarding the approaches to Charleston Harbor, and not another soldier on her soil.

"Georgia. Does my gallant friend from Georgia [Mr. GORDON] who knows better than I the force and strength of military organization, the senior Senator, and the junior also—are both or either of those Senators alarmed at the presence of twenty-nine soldiers in Georgia? There are just twenty-nine there.

"Tennessee. Is the honorable Senator from Tennessee [Mr. BAILEY] alarmed at the progress of military despotism in his State? There is not a single Federal soldier on the soil of Tennessee, not one.

"Kentucky. I see both the honorable Senators from Kentucky here. They have equal cause with Tennessee to be alarmed, for there is not a Federal soldier in Kentucky—not one!

"Missouri. Not one.

"Arkansas. Fifty-seven in Arkansas.

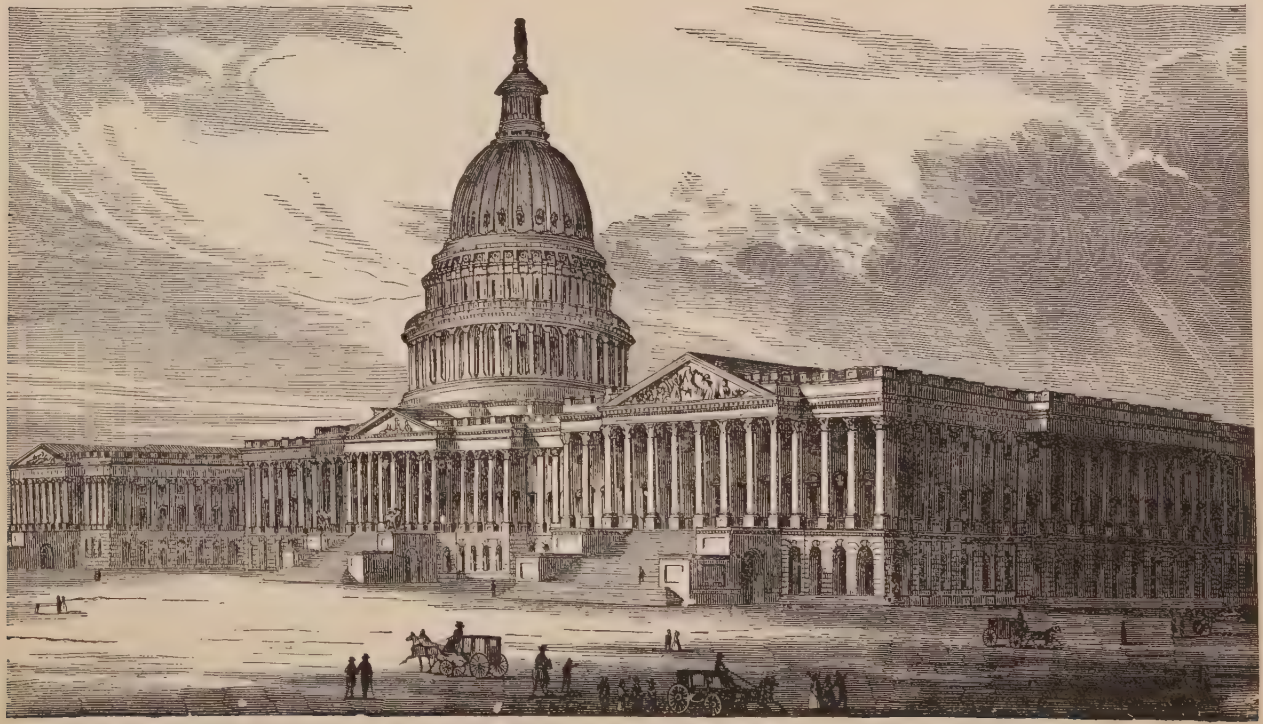
"Alabama. I think my friend from Alabama [Mr. MORGAN] is greatly excited over this question, and in his State there are thirty-two Federal soldiers located at an arsenal of the United States.

"Mississippi. The great State of Mississippi, that is in danger of being trodden under the iron hoof of military power, has not a Federal soldier on its soil."

Thus did the ready speaker proceed over the several states, provoking merriment at each fresh disclosure and exposing the absolute absurdity of the issue then so grossly magnified by his opponents. Returning to his main work after this statistical by-play, he continued:

"Mr. President, it was said, as the old maxim has it, that the soothsayers of Rome could not look each other in the face without smiling. There are not two Democratic Senators on this floor who can go into the cloak-room and look each other in the face without smiling at this talk, or, more appropriately, I should say, without blushing —the whole thing is such a prodigious and absolute farce, such a miserably manufactured false issue, such a pretense without the slightest foundation in the world, and talked about most and denounced the loudest in States that have not had a single Federal soldier.

* * * * * *



EAST FRONT OF CAPITOL AT WASHINGTON.

"What, then, is the real motive underlying this movement? Senators on that side, Democratic orators on the stump, cannot make any sensible set of men at the cross-roads believe that they are afraid of eleven hundred and fifty-five soldiers, distributed one to each county in the South. The minute you state that everybody sees the utter, palpable, and laughable absurdity of it, and therefore we must go further and find a motive for all this cry. We want to find out, to use a familiar and vulgar phrase, what is "the cat under the meal." It is not the troops. That is evident. There are more troops, by fifty per cent., scattered through the Northern States east of the Mississippi to-day than through the Southern States east of the Mississippi, and yet nobody in the North speaks of it; everybody would be laughed at for speaking of it; and therefore the issue, I take no risk in stating, I make bold to declare, that this issue on the troops, being a false one, being one without foundation, conceals the true issue, which is simply to get rid of the Federal presence at Federal elections, to get rid of the *civil power of the United States* in the election of Representatives to the Congress of the United States. That is the whole of it; and disguise it as you may, there is nothing else in it or of it."

This merciless method of exposing what Mr. Blaine's judgment condemned made him an antagonist not to be aroused with impunity. But

he did not need to be "stirred up" for an attack. His keen scent led him unerringly to the exact lurking-place of evil, and when it was discovered, his indomitable courage never faltered. And yet those assailed the most sharply were at the same time so held by Mr. Blaine's manner that they never cherished ill-will.

The late Governor Kent, of Maine, summed up Mr. Blaine's general "quickness," or "dash," or by whatever term it may best be designated, as follows:

"Almost from the day of his assuming editorial charge of the Kennebec *Journal*, at the early age of twenty-three, Mr. Blaine sprang into a position of great influence in the politics and policy of Maine. At twenty-five he was a leading power in the councils of the Republican party, so recognized by Fessenden, Hamlin, the two Morrills, and others, then and still prominent in the State. Before he was twenty-nine he was chairman of the executive committee of the Republican organization in Maine—a position he has held ever since, and from which he has practically shaped and directed every political campaign in the State—always leading his party to brilliant victory. Had Mr. Blaine been New-England born, he would probably not have received such rapid advancement at so early an age, even with the same ability he possessed. But there was a sort of Western *dash* about him that took with us Down-Easters; an expression of frankness,

candor and confidence that gave him from the start a very strong and permanent hold on our people, and as the foundation of all, a pure character and a masterly ability equal to all demands made upon him."

As a reflection on Mr. Blaine's quickness it is asked, disparagingly, "What great measure did Mr. Blaine ever originate?" One might go on indefinitely asking what great measure did Mr. Sherman or Mr. Thurman ever originate, or Mr. Edmunds or Mr. Conkling or Mr. Webster or Mr Gallatin? Such critics and such criticisms are equally shallow. Great measures grow in the minds of the people. Specie payment came after long public discussion, and it is useless to be quarrelling as to who it was that drafted the bill passed in 1875. So it is with all measures of great public moment. They do not spring from the mind of one man sitting behind his Congressional desk. The duty of the statesman is to shape, mould, guide, direct in a Republican government. The creative power is in the minds of many, and the cause of action is necessity. The great lawyer does not create his case. He argues it, develops it, applies principles to it, but in any case Mr. Blaine is among the first to see, and the earliest to act.

To say that Mr. Blaine has been a power in Congress for the past seventeen years is simply to affirm current history. Though entering very

young, he made his mark at once. At the period of darkest depressions in the war, when anxiety brooded everywhere and boded everything, Mr. Blaine delivered a speech on "The Ability of the American People to Suppress the Rebellion," which has been cited for the great attention and warm commendation it received. Its value lay not alone in its timeliness, for after its first wide circulation it was reprinted as a campaign document in the Presidential campaign of 1864.

It was the delivery of this speech, and some discussions which took place shortly after, that caused Thaddeus Stevens to say of him: "Blaine of Maine has shown as great aptitude and ability for the higher walks of public life as any man that had come to Congress during my period of service."

CHAPTER XIV.

"STIRRING UP STRIFE."

On May 19th, 1879, there was a lively time in the Senate on the question of National Sovereignty *versus* State Sovereignty. The question before the Senate was a bill making appropriations for the legislative, executive, and judicial expenses of the Government, but discussion took a wide range, and abounded in cross-firing of wit and repartee. Mr. Blaine had the floor, but Mr. Eaton, of Connecticut, Mr. Bayard, of Delaware, Mr. Butler, of South Carolina, and others, figured largely in the discussions. Toward the close of the discussion, Mr. Blaine, continuing his frequently interrupted speech, and seeking to unearth the sources of existing ill-will, said:

"I do not think the evil that has been done to the Southern country by the school-books in the hands of their children has been measured. Many of the books put into the hands of the rising generation of the South are tinctured all through with prejudice and misrepresentation and with a spirit of hatred.

"We are accused by our friends on the opposite side of the Chamber of stirring up strife

and generating hatred. I do not believe it would be possible to find in all the literature of the North for the schools and for the young a solitary paragraph intended or calculated to arouse hatred or suggest unpatriotic feelings toward any portion of the Union. A large portion of the South has been furnished with special school-books calculated for the meridian, with the facts appended to suit that particular locality. It was said that for two generations a large portion of the English people believed that the American colonies had never achieved their independence, but had been kicked off as a useless appendage to the British Empire, and that they were glad to be rid of us.

"There is a large number of the school children in the South who are educated with radically wrong notions and radically erroneous facts. I saw an arithmetic that was filled with examples—think of putting politics into an arithmetic—such as this: If ten cowardly Yankees had so many miles the start, and five brave Confederates were following them, the first going at so many miles an hour, and the others following at so many miles an hour, how long before the Yankees would be overtaken? Now, think of putting that deliberately in a school-book and having school histories made up on that basis for children. I have here from a gentleman who, I believe, is a man of high position, an extract which is so pertinent that I desire to read it. It is from an address before

the literary societies of the Virginia University, by Mr. John S. Preston, a gentleman of distinction, I believe, in the State of South Carolina. I want to read this merely to put it on record to show the pabulum on which the Southern mind feeds:

'The Mayflower freight, under the laws of England, was heresy and crime. The Jamestown emigrant was an English freeman, loyal to his country and his God, with England's honor in his heart and English piety in his soul, and carrying in his right hand the charters, usages, and the laws which were achieving the regenerations of England. * * * These two peoples spoke the same language, and nominally read the same Bible; but like the offspring of the Syrian princes, they were two manner of people, and they could not coalesce or commune. Their feud began beyond the broad Atlantic, and has never ceased on its Western shores. Not space, or time, or the convenience of any human law, or the power of any human arm, can reconcile institutions for the turbulent fanatic of Plymouth Rock and the God-fearing Christian of Jamestown. You may assign them to the closest territorial proximity, with all the forms, modes, and shows of civilization; but you can never cement them into the bonds of brotherhood. Great nature, in her supremest law, forbids it. Territorial localization drove them to a hollow and unnatural armistice in effecting their segregation from England—the one for the lucre of traffic, the other to obtain a more perfect law of liberty; the one to destroy foreign tea, the other to drive out foreign tyrants; the one to offer thanksgiving for the fruit of the earth, the other to celebrate the gift of grace by the birth of Christ.'

"I know the piety of New England has sometimes been criticised, but I never before heard of such fervent zeal among the Jamestown emigrants."

MR. BUTLER. What is the date of that?

MR. BLAINE. I think in 1875 or 1876. Does the Senator from South Carolina think that is enough to establish a statute of limitations?

MR. BUTLER. I say nothing about it.

MR. MORGAN. May I be allowed a word?

MR. BLAINE. Certainly.

MR. MORGAN. I have not seen all these arithmetics, or school histories either, to which the Senator from Maine refers. I doubt very much their existence, unless the Senator has them present to prove the fact. I refer now to those published since the war.

MR. BLAINE. I refer only to those published since the war.

MR. MORGAN. There is some other literature, however, in the Southern States which I will call the attention of the Senator from Maine to, that perhaps would indicate that there was some necessity for counter proceedings for the purpose of infusing the minds of the people down there with correct ideas on political questions. I hold in my hand the "minutes of the twelfth session of the Alabama Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, held at Mobile, Alabama, in Emmanuel church, December 18, 19, 20, 21, and

22, 1878, Right Reverend Bishop J. P. Campbell, D. D., LL. D., president." He is a colored man, and a very learned man I am told. On page 13 of the minutes of that conference I find the following entry:

"Committee on letters and petitions:

"First. Complaint against Z. Taylor, of Birmingham, for voting Democratic ticket, signed by United States marshal."

The decision was:

"His case out of jurisdiction of this conference; belongs to North Alabama conference." [Laughter.]

I have no comment to make upon that.

MR. BLAINE. That begins to show me that the claim for piety in the South that Mr. Preston makes has some foundation. [Laughter.] If they begin to bring up men before church conferences for voting the Democratic, State-rights, secession ticket, I think it is good evidence of reform. [Laughter.] It gives some ground of patriotic hope for the future.

"I have here also a speech delivered by the honorable Senator from South Carolina, the junior Senator from that State [MR. HAMPTON], before the Historical Society, I believe, of the South, and this has arrested my attention. Of course, I read it in no spirit of captious or personal criticism, but as a great public document; and if what I read means anything, it means a great deal:

'These are the lessons our children should learn from their mothers. Nor are these the only ones which should be inculcated, for the pages of history furnish many which should not be overlooked. These teach, in the clearest and most emphatic manner, that there is always hope for a people who cherish the spirit of freedom, who will not tamely give up their rights, and who, amid all the changes of time, the trials of adversity, remain steadfast to their convictions that liberty is their birthright.

* * * * * * * *

'When Napoleon in that wonderful campaign of Jena, struck down in a few weeks the whole military strength of Prussia, destroyed that army with which the great Frederick had held at bay the combined forces of Europe, and crushed out, apparently forever, the liberties, seemingly the very existence of that great state, but one hope of disenthrallment and regeneration was left her—the unconquered and unconquerable patriotism of her sons. As far as human foresight could penetrate the future, this hope appeared but a vain and delusive one; yet only a few years passed before her troops turned the scale of victory at Waterloo, and the treaty of Paris atoned in part for the mortification of that of Tilsit.

* * * * * * * *

'She educated her children by a system which made them good citizens in peace and formidable soldiers in war; she kindled and kept alive the sacred fire of patriotism; she woke the slumbering spirit of the Fatherland; and what has been the result of this self-devotion of a whole people for half a century? Single-handed she has just met her old antagonist. The shame of her defeats of yore has been wiped out by glorious victories; the contributions extorted from her have been more than

repaid; her insults have been avenged, and her victorious eagles, sweeping over the broken lilies of her enemy, waved in triumph from the walls of conquered Paris, while she dictated peace to prostrate and humbled France. Is not the moral to be drawn from this noble dedication of a people to the interests and honor of their country worth rememberiug.

'Hungary in her recent struggle to throw off the yoke of Austria was crushed to the earth, and yet to-day the Hungarians, as citizens of Austria, exercise a controlling power in that great empire.'

"I say, if that means anything, it means a great deal. If that means anything at all, it means the education of the rising generation of the South for another conflict; it means that or else it is vapid and idle rhetoric. And I say again, Mr. President, that throughout the length and breadth of the South the one evil omen of to-day is the literature that is given to the children and the intellectual food that is offered to all the young and rising men in the institutions of learning, in their academies, their colleges, their universities ——

Mr. HAMPTON. May I ask the Senator from Maine to yield to me for a moment?

Mr. BLAINE. With great pleasure.

Mr. HAMPTON. The words which he has done me the honor to quote do not mean what he is pleased to call another rebellion. If it is "idle and vapid rhetoric," I admit that it is not such rhetoric as he pours out; but if it is vapid and idle

rhetoric I have only to plead guilty to the charge when made by him.

Mr. BLAINE. If the Senator speaks of a revival of a power that was once conquered, to be victorious at another Waterloo, with a crowning peace in Paris to atone for the humiliation of Tilsit—if that means anything by analogy at all, it has a deep and far-reaching significance.

Mr. HAMPTON.

"Peace hath her victories
No less renowned than war."

Mr. BLAINE. But peace does not celebrate her victories on the plains of Waterloo. That is where war celebrates its triumphs. Peace does not celebrate itself by great armed hosts that are employed and marshaled for avenging insult, to which the honorable Senator called attention. That is not the language of peace, and without the slightest intention to say anything discourteous, I say it is mere rhetoric—I leave out the adjective—it is mere rhetoric, or it is a prodigious menace. It is the one or the other.

"As to the pending bill, I need only to say that the laws proposed to be repealed are precisely the kind which Mr. Webster alluded to when he addressed Mr. Calhoun; laws that have received the sanction of Congress and been for years on the statute-book. They are there properly. They have secured justice; they have assured fair and equal elections; they ought to be upheld; and to

this hour not one solitary reason has been shown for their repeal, with the single exception of a desire to grasp partisan power. It all moves in one direction. Every step has been taken since the Democratic party got into power in the House and in the Senate in one direction, and that direction has been to the striking down of the Federal power and the exaltation of the State power. This measure is but one. Others have gone before it; others are to follow it. What may be their fate I do not know. We on this side will resist by every constitutional means, and you on that side, despite the threats of the Senator from Connecticut, will be obliged to submit in the end, and the power of this Government will not be put down by a threat; it will not be put down by a combination; it will not be put down by a political party. It was not put down by a rebellion. It can meet another, either in the form of organized resistance in withholding supplies, or in the more serious form which the language of the Senator from South Carolina seemed to foreshadow."

Thus squarely did Mr. Blaine meet any and all comers in the interests of opposition to his national life and prosperity. His fulness of information, his facility of expression, and his capacity for instantaneous and telling reply, made him effective at all times. At the close of this

particular effort, the galleries broke into prolonged applause, which the President of the Senate was for a time powerless to check. For the passing moment it might seem that Mr. Blaine did stir up strife, but his was the work of the skillful surgeon who cuts to cure; who seeks sound healing rather than superficial smoothness.

CHAPTER XV.

WITHERING SARCASM.

It will be remembered that in April, 1879, the passing of the necessary appropriation bills was refused on the decision of the Democratic caucus, unless accompanied with the passage of certain other bills, planned and favored by the same authority. Such an effort to coerce legislation could but arouse the indignation of every free and fearless man, and it did thoroughly arouse Mr. Blaine, and call forth his withering power of denunciation and sarcasm, which weapons he employs reluctantly, and never except on pressing occasions. On this movement he spoke thus in the Senate:

"We are told, too, rather a novel thing, that if we do not take these laws, we are not to have the appropriations. I believe it has been announced in both branches of Congress, I suppose on the authority of the Democratic caucus, that if we do not take these bills as they are planned, we shall not have any of the appropriations that go with them. The honorable Senator from West Virginia [Mr. Hereford] told it to us on Friday; the honorable Senator from Ohio [Mr. Thurman]

told it to us last session; the honorable Senator from Kentucky [Mr. BECK] told it to us at the same time, and I am not permitted to speak of the legions who told us so in the other House. They say all these appropriations are to be refused—not merely the Army appropriation, for they do not stop at that. Look, for a moment, at the legislative bill that came from the Democratic caucus. Here is an appropriation in it for defraying the expenses of the Supreme Court and the circuit and district courts of the United States, including the District of Columbia, &c., '$2,800,000:' 'Provided'—provided what?—'That the following sections of the Revised Statutes relating to elections' (Going on to recite them) 'be repealed.'

"That is, you will pass an appropriation for the support of the judiciary of the United States only on condition of this repeal. We often speak of this government being divided between three great departments, the executive, the legislative, and the judicial—co-ordinate, independent, equal. The legislative, under the control of a Democratic caucus, now steps forward and says, 'We offer to the Executive this bill, and if he does not sign it, we are going to starve the judiciary.' That is carrying the thing a little further than I have ever known. We do not merely propose to starve the Executive if he will not sign the bill, but we propose to starve the judiciary that has had nothing

whatever to do with the question. That has been boldly avowed on this floor; that has been boldly avowed in the other House; that has been boldly avowed in Democratic papers throughout the country.

"And you propose not merely to starve the judiciary, but you propose that you will not appropriate a solitary dollar to take care of this Capitol. The men who take care of this great amount of public property are provided for in that bill. You say they shall not have any pay if the President will not agree to change the election laws. There is the public printing that goes on for the enlightment of the whole country and for printing the public documents of every one of the departments. You say they shall not have a dollar for public printing unless the President agrees to repeal these laws.

"There is the Congressional Library that has become the pride of the whole American people for its magnificent growth and extent. You say it shall not have one dollar to take care of it, much less add a new book, unless the President signs these bills. There is the Department of State that we think throughout the history of the Government has been a great pride to this country for the ability with which it has conducted our foreign affairs; it is also to be starved. You say we shall not have any intercourse with foreign nations, not a dollar shall be appropriated there-

for unless the President signs these bills. There is the Light-House Board that provides for the beacons and the warnings on seventeen thousand miles of sea and gulf and lake coast. You say those lights shall all go out and not a dollar shall be appropriated for the board if the President does not sign these bills. There are the mints of the United States at Philadelphia, New Orleans, Denver, San Francisco, coining silver and coining gold—not a dollar shall be appropriated for them if the President does not sign these bills. There is the Patent office, the patents issued which embody the invention of the country—not a dollar for them. The Pension Bureau shall cease its operations unless these bills are signed, and patriotic soldiers may starve. The Agricultural Bureau, the Post Office Department, every one of the great executive functions of the Government is threatened, taken by the throat, highwayman style, collared on the highway, commanded to stand and deliver in the name of the Democratic congressional caucus. That is what it is ; simply that. No committee of this Congress in either branch has ever recommended that legislation—not one. Simply a Democratic caucus has done it.

" Of course, this is new. We are learning something every day. I think you may search the records of the Federal Government in vain ; it will take some one much more industrious in that

search than I have ever been, and much more observant than I have ever been, to find any possible parallel or any possible suggestion in our past history of any such thing. Most of the Senators who sit in this chamber can remember some vetoes by Presidents that shook this country to its centre with excitement. The veto of the national bank bill by Jackson in 1832, remembered by the oldest in this Chamber; the veto of the national bank bill in 1841 by Tyler, remembered by those not the oldest, shook this country with a political excitement which up to that time had scarcely a parallel; and it was believed, whether rightfully or wrongfully is no matter, it was believed by those who advocated those financial measures at the time, that they were of the very last importance to the well-being and prosperity of the people of the Union. That was believed by the great and shining lights of that day. It was believed by that man of imperial character and imperious will, the great Senator from Kentucky. It was believed by Mr. Webster, the greatest of New England Senators. When Jackson vetoed the one or Tyler vetoed the other, did you ever hear a suggestion that those bank charters should be put on appropriation bills, or that there should not be a dollar to run the Government until they were signed? So far from it that, in 1841, when temper was at its height; when the Whig party, in addition to losing their

great measure, lost it under the sting and the irritation of what they believed was a desertion by the President whom they had chosen; and when Mr. Clay, goaded by all these considerations, rose to debate the question in the Senate, he repelled the suggestion of William C. Rives, of Virginia, who attempted to make upon him the point that he had indulged in some threat involving the independence of the Executive. Mr. Clay rose to his full height and thus responded:

"'I said nothing whatever of any obligation on the part of the President to conform his judgment to the opinions of the Senate and the House of Representatives, although the Senator argued as if I had, and persevered in so arguing after repeated correction. I said no such thing. I know and I respect the perfect independence of each department, acting within its proper sphere, of the other departments.'

"The late vice-president of the confederacy boasted—perhaps I had better say stated—that for sixty out of the seventy-two years preceding the outbreak of the Rebellion, from the foundation of the Government, the South, though in a minority, had, by combining with what he termed the anti-centralists in the North, ruled the country; and in 1866 the same gentleman indicated in a speech, I think before the Legislature of Georgia, that by a return to Congress the South might repeat the experiment with the same successful result. I read that speech at the time; but I little

thought I should live to see so near a fulfillment of its prediction. I see here to-day two great measures emanating, as I have said, not from a committee of either House, but from a Democratic caucus in which the South has an overwhelming majority, two-thirds in the House, and out of forty-two Senators on the other side of this Chamber professing the Democratic faith thirty are from the South—twenty-three, a positive and pronounced majority, having themselves been participants in the war against the Union, either in military or civil station. So that as a matter of fact, plainly deducible from counting your fingers, the legislation of this country to-day, shaped and fashioned in a Democratic caucus where the confederates of the South hold the majority, is the realization of Mr. Stephens' prophecy. And very appropriately the House under that control and the Senate under that control, embodying thus the entire legislative powers of the Government, deriving its political strength from the South, elected from the South, say to the President of the United States, at the head of the Executive Department of the Government, elected as he was from the North—elected by the whole people, but elected as a Northern man ; elected on Republican principles, elected in opposition to the party that controls both branches of Congress to-day—they naturally say, 'You shall not exercise your constitutional power to veto a bill.' . . . . . .

"I do not profess to know, Mr. President, least of all Senators on this floor, certainly as little as any Senator on this floor, do I profess to know, what the President of the United States will do when these bills are presented to him, as I suppose, in due course of time, they will be. I certainly should never speak a solitary word of disrespect of the gentleman holding that exalted position, and I hope I should not speak a word unbefitting the dignity of the office of a Senator of the United States. But as there has been speculation here and there on both sides as to what he would do, it seems to me that the dead heroes of the Union would rise from their graves if he should consent to be intimidated and outraged in his proper constitutional power by threats like these.

"All the war measures of Abraham Lincoln are to be wiped out, say leading Democrats! The Bourbons of France busied themselves, I believe, after the restoration in removing every trace of Napoleon's power and grandeur, even chiseling the "N" from public monuments raised to perpetuate his glory; but the dead man's hand from Saint Helena reached out and destroyed them in their pride and in their folly. And I tell the Senators on the other side of this Chamber—I tell the Democratic party North and South—South in the lead and North following,—that, the slow, unmoving finger of scorn, from the tomb of the

martyred President on the praries of Illinois, will wither and destroy them. Though dead he speaketh.

"When you present these bills with these threats to the living President, who bore the commission of Abraham Lincoln and served with honor in the Army of the Union, which Lincoln restored and preserved, I can think only of one appropriate response from his lips or his pen. He should say to you with all the scorn befitting his station:

'Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?'"

CHAPTER XVI.

IRISH-AMERICAN AND GERMAN QUESTIONS.

The record of the Blaine family on all questions relating to American citizens of Irish descent, as well as the political position of Ireland and the Irish at home, has been marked and unmistakable, going back as far as the Revolution and continuing to the present hour. The blood of James G. Blaine is of the most direct Scotch-Irish, and he has all the good qualities of that impetuous, earnest, affectionate, courageous and kind-hearted race. The following paragraph is from a trustworthy source, and is known to be accurate by the oldest citizens of Washington and Cumberland Counties, in Pennsylvania:

Prominent in the list of members of the "Friendly Sons of St. Patrick," for 1780, is the name of Colonel Ephraim Blaine, the grandfather of the "Plumed Knight." The society changed its name, in 1790, to "The Hibernian Society." No one could ever be a member unless of Irish birth or of direct Irish descent. The only exception ever made was in the case of General George Washington, who was an adopted member. Among the distinguished men who have belonged to the

society are Matthew Mease, purser of the Bonhomme Richard, one of a family that afterward changed its name to Butler, to inherit some property in Ireland; one member of it, Pierce Butler, married Fannie Kemble, the famous actress; Thomas Read, commander of the Alliance frigate; Thomas Fitzsimmons, of the Continental Congress; Robert Gray, of Gray's Ferry; General Anthony Wayne, and many others. As the portrait of Marino Faliero, the traitor, is represented by a tablet in the collection of portraits of the Venetian Doges, so the one black sheep of the society is represented in the list of members by Captain Thomas Batt, whose name appears with the marginal note: "Expelled for disloyalty to the colonial cause."

Mr. Blaine, no longer ago than the last Presidential election, wrote a letter of no uncertain import. The newspapers of England have adequate reason, from a selfish standpoint, for attacking Mr. Blaine. All our commercial interests are in conflict with England, and while that great country is secure in the knowledge that the United States will make no encroachments on its control of the world's trade, there will be nothing but praise from its statesmen and newspapers for the administration that happens to be in power in this country. But once let it be understood that the United States Government intends to advance its own interests and claim the supremacy that

belongs to it—in the great South American and Eastern trade particularly—then the English press, inspired by the government, which is their master, will contain nothing but adverse criticism and abuse of us. So it is just as well that Mr. Blaine is not popular in England.

The following letter was written by Mr. Blaine to a very prominent and influential Irishman in Eastern Maine nearly four years ago:

"AUGUSTA, Maine, Oct. 27, 1880.

"MY DEAR SIR: I received your friendly letter with much pleasure. Let me say, in reply, that the course of yourself and other Irish voters is one of the most extraordinary anomalies in our political history. Never, probably, since the execution of Robert Emmett, has the feeling of Irishmen, the world over, been so bitter against England and Englishmen as it is at this hour. And yet the great mass of the Irish voters in the United States will, on Tuesday next, vote precisely as Englishmen would have them vote, for the interests of England.

"Having seen Ireland reduced to misery and driven to despair by what they regard as the unjust policy of England, the Irishmen of America use their suffrage as though they were the agents and servants of the English Tories. The Free-traders of England desire nothing so much as the defeat of Garfield and the election of Hancock. They wish to break down the protective tariff and cripple our manufacturers, and nine-tenths of the Irish voters in this country respond with alacrity, 'Yes, we will do your bidding, and vote to please you, even though it reduce our own wages, and take the bread from the mouths of our children.'

"There are many able men and many clever writers among the Irish in America, but I have never met any one of them able enough or clever enough to explain this anomaly on any basis of logic and good sense.

"I am glad to see, from your esteemed favor, that the subject is beginning to trouble you. The more you think of it the more you will be troubled, I am sure. And you will be driven finally to the conclusion that the prosperity of the Irish in this country depends as largely as that of any other class upon the maintenance of the financial and industrial policy represented by the Republican party.

"Very truly yours,

"JAMES G. BLAINE."

Mr. Blaine can only increase in reputation and popularity by an examination of his course toward his fellow citizens of Germanic blood, and their kinsmen still in the Fatherland. It has been marked by consistent justice, kindliness and mutual regard. Thus he spoke from his heart when it became his agreeable duty to extend to certain distinguished Germans the hospitality of the Republic on a well-remembered occasion. It would be unfair to alter or curtail his own words in this instance, and his letter of invitation is accordingly appended. It was addressed to Mr. Andrew D. White, then U. S. Minister to Germany:

"DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

"*Washington, July 30, 1881.*

"SIR:—During the darkest period of the Revolutionary War, a German soldier of character and distinction

tendered his sword in aid of American Independence Frederick William Augustus, Baron Steuben, joined Washington at Valley Forge, in the memorable and disastrous winter of 1778. He attested the sincerity of his attachment to the patriot cause by espousing it when its fortunes were adverse, its prospects gloomy, and its hopes, but for the intense zeal of the people, well-nigh crushed.

"The Baron Steuben was received by Washington with the most cordial welcome, and immediately placed on duty as inspector-general of the army. A detailed history of his military career in America would form an epitome of the revolutionary struggle. He had served in the Seven Years' War on the staff of the great Frederick, and had acquired in the campaigns of that master of military science the skill and the experience so much needed by the untrained soldiers of the Continental army. The drill and discipline and effective organization which, under the commanding patronage of Washington, were at once imparted to the American army by the zeal and diligence of Steuben, transformed the volunteers and raw levies into veterans, who successfully met the British regulars in all the campaigns of that prolonged struggle.

"The final surrender of the British army under Lord Cornwallis occurred at Yorktown, Va., on the 19th day of October, 1781. Baron Steuben bore a most conspicuous part in the arduous campaign which ended so auspiciously for the Continental army, and it fell to his lot to receive the first official notification of the proposed capitulation, and to bear it to the illustrious commander-in-chief.

"The centennial of that great event in American history is to be celebrated with appropriate observances and ceremonies on the approaching anniversary. I am

directed by the President to tender, through you, an invitation to the representatives of Baron Steuben's family in Germany, to attend the celebration as guests of the Government of the United States. You will communicate the invitation through the imperial minister of foreign affairs, and will express to him the very earnest desire of this government that it shall be accepted.

"Those who come as the representatives of Baron Steuben's family will be assured, in our day of peace and prosperity, of as warm a welcome as was given to their illustrious kinsman in the dark days of adversity and war. They will be the honored guests of fifty millions of Americans, a vast number of whom have German blood in their veins and constitute one of the most worthy and valuable elements that make up the strength of the Republic. Intensely devoted, with patriotic fidelity to America, they yet retain and cherish and transmit the most affectionate memory of fatherland. To these the visit of Baron Steuben's relatives will have something of the revival of family ties, while to all Americans, of whatever origin, the presence of German guests will afford fitting opportunity of testifying their respect for that great country, within whose imperial limits are included so much of human grandeur and human progress.

"I am, sir, &c.,

"JAMES G. BLAINE."

Eight of the descendants of Baron Steuben, including the present head of the family, with the consent and approval of their Government, accepted this invitation in the same spirit in which it was extended. They were so impressed with the treatment they received, not only from the

American Government and people generally, but in particular from Mr. Blaine, who was specially charged with their welfare, that they united in a report to the German Government after their return, asking that their personal thanks to him might be supplemented by some official expression. Mr. Blaine thereupon received portraits of the Emperor, the Crown Prince and Prince Bismarck, bearing their autograph signatures, and an autograph letter from the aged Emperor, conveying acknowledgements of all the courtesies shown and expressions of personal esteem.

This incident has not been forgotten by the German-Americans in this country. After Mr. Blaine's nomination, Mr. William Mayer, editor and publisher of four independent German newspapers in New York, a morning and an afternoon daily, a weekly and a Sunday journal, all of large circulation, was asked his opinion of the candidate. He replied, "I believe he is certain to be elected. It is quite true, that there is some hesitation among Germans, owing to reports that have been put in circulation by his opponents that he is a German hater and a temperance fanatic. I know Mr. Blaine too well to think for a moment that he is either. His invitation to the Steuben family, and his whole bearing toward them while they were in this country, are sufficient proof to me that he is no German hater."

At the same time, Mr. Blaine did not confine

himself to civilities toward the Germans, or give room for the accusation that he sought the favor of the high rather than the lowly. He used all his influence with Germany, and strongly supported the efforts of Minister White, in securing the proper settlement of all matters of dispute in regard to the nationality of our adopted citizens. This was the only serious question with Germany during his term, and his firmness contributed not a little to its satisfactory adjustment, especially in regard to Germany's new territory in Alsace-Lorraine, which was for a time, claimed not to be subject to the naturalization treatise made previous to its acquisition.

CHAPTER XVII

ENFRANCHISED OR DISFRANCHISED.

WHETHER the negro ever should have been enfranchised, or, having received this weighty honor, whether he should be disfranchised, are problems that statesmen and philanthropists have grappled with in the by-gone years, and on it they have expended their best strength. L. Q. C. Lamar, Wade Hampton, Alexander H. Stephens, Wendell Phillips, James A. Garfield, Montgomery Blair, and troops of other giants upon either side have done valiant service for their respective views, but none of them has sounded a clearer note, nor struck it more forcefully than James G. Blaine.

Questions of this character owe their origin not to any cooling of philanthropic interest, not to any novel or radical views about universal suffrage, but to the fact that, in the judgment of many of those hitherto accounted wisest, negro suffrage has failed to attain the ends hoped for when the franchise was conferred; failed as a means of more completely securing the negro's civil rights; failed to bring him the consideration which generally attaches to power; failed, indeed,

to achieve anything except to increase the political weight and influence of those against whom, and in spite of whom, his enfranchisement was secured. For these reasons it has been thought that the enfranchisement of the negro was premature, and that even now it needs modification. There are not wanting those, too, who, on the ground of the alleged inferiority of the negro, will clamor against his right of franchise as it now exists, and would strip him of it wholly. On the situation as thus outlined, Mr. Blaine has delivered himself as follows:

"*First.* The two classes I have named, contemplating the possible or desirable disfranchisement of the negro from entirely different standpoints, and with entirely different aims, are both and equally in the wrong. The first is radically in error in supposing that a disfranchisement of the negro would put him in the way of any development or progress that would in time fit him for the suffrage. He would instead grow more and more unfit for it every day from the time the first backward step should be taken, and he would relapse, if not into actual chattel slavery, yet into such a dependent and defenseless condition as would result in only another form of servitude.

* * * * * * *

The second class is wrong in anticipating even the remote possibility of securing the legal disfranchisement of the negro without a reduction of

representation. Both sides have fenced for position on this question. * * *

"*Second.* But, while discussing the question of the disfranchisement of the negro, and settling its justice or expediency according to our discretion, it may be worth while to look at its impracticability, or, to state it still more strongly, its impossibility. Logicians attach weight to arguments drawn *ab inconvenienti.* * * * The negro is secure against disfranchisement by two constitutional amendments, and he can not be remanded to the non-voting class until both these amendments are annulled. And these amendments can not be annulled until two-thirds of the Senate and two-thirds of the House of Representatives of the United States shall propose, and a majority in the Legislatures or conventions of twenty-nine States shall, by affirmative vote, approve the annulment. In other words, the negro can not be disfranchised so long as one vote more than one-third in the United States Senate, or one vote more than one-third in the House of Representatives, shall be recorded against it; and if these securities and safeguards should give way, then the disfranchisement could not be effected so long as a majority in one branch in the Legislatures of only ten States should refuse to assent to it, and refuse to assent to a convention to which it might be referred. No human right on this continent is more completely guaranteed than the right against

disfranchisement on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude, as embodied in the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

"*Third.* In enforcement and elucidation of my second point, it is of interest to observe the rapid advance and development of popular sentiment in regard to the rights of the negro as expressed in the last three amendments to the constitution of the United States. In 1865 Congress submitted the Thirteenth Amendment, which merely gave the negro freedom, without suffrage, civil rights, or citizenship. In 1866 the Fourteenth Amendment was submitted, declaring the negro to be a citizen, but not forbidding the States to withhold suffrage from him—yet inducing them to grant it by the provision that representation in Congress should be reduced in proportion to the exclusion of male citizens twenty-one years of age from the right to vote, except for rebellion or other crime. In 1869 the decisive step was taken of declaring that 'the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude.' A most important provision in this amendment is the inhibition upon the 'United States' as well as upon 'any State;' for it would not be among the impossible results of a great political revolution, resting on prejudice and grasping for power, that, in the absence

of this express negation, the United States might assume or usurp the right to deprive the negro of suffrage, and then the States would not be subjected to the forfeiture of representation provided in the Fourteenth Amendment as the result of the denial or abridgement of suffrage by State authority. In this stately progression of organic enactments the will of a great people is embodied, and its reversal would be one of those revolutions which would convulse social order and endanger the authority of law. There will be no step backward, but under the provision which specifically confers on Congress the power to enforce each amendment by 'appropriate legislation' there will be applied from time to time, fitfully perhaps and yet certainly, the restraining and correcting edicts of national authority.

"*Fourth.* As I have already hinted, there will be no attempt made in the Southern States to disfranchise the negro by any of those methods which would still be within the power of the State. There is no Southern State that would dare venture on an educational qualification, because by the last census [1870] there were more than one million white persons over fifteen years of age, in the states lately slave-holding, who could not read a word, and a still larger number who could not write their names. There was, of course, a still greater number of negroes of the same ages who could not read or write; but, in the nine years

that have intervened since the census was taken, there has been a much greater advance in the education of the negroes than in the education of the poor whites of the South; and to-day on an educational qualification it is quite probable that, while the proportion would be in favor of the whites, the absolute exclusion of the whites in some of the States would be nearly as great as that of the negroes. Nor would a property test operate with any greater advantage to the whites. The slave States always had a large class of very poor and entirely uneducated whites, and any qualification of property that would seriously diminish the negro vote would also cut off a very large number of whites from the suffrage.

"The second interrogatory, 'Ought he to have been enfranchised?' is not practical but speculative; and yet, unless it can be answered with confidence in the affirmative, the moral tenure of his suffrage is weakened, and, as a consequence, his legal right to enjoy it is impaired. For myself, I answer the second question in the affirmative, with as little hesitation as I answered the first in the negative. And, if the question were again submitted to the judgment of Congress, I would vote for suffrage in the light of experience with more confidence than I voted for it in the light of an experiment."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CHINESE QUESTION.

When the bill restricting Chinese immigration was passed, Mr. Blaine gave it his support. Mr. William Lloyd Garrison followed this action with some severe strictures upon the course pursued by those gentleman of the Senate who stood with Mr. Blaine in this vote. To these reflections Mr. Blaine replied in a letter already cited. The document was full and frank, and its statements of facts were fortified by testimonies of the most reliable character. He stated his reasons for his personal action in ten distinct propositions. He first contends that Chinese immigration is in no true and good sense immigration at all. Secondly, that those who come, whether males or females, are almost without exception, of the lowest and vilest classes. Thirdly, that those who have come do not assimilate with our nationalities, but in language, dress, customs, and religion, remain separate and distinct as at the very first of their settlement on our shores. Their squalor and filth also separate them from all their American neighbors. His fourth point touches

the relation of Chinese to American labor. He says:

"Is it not inevitable that a class of men living in this degraded and filthy condition, and on the poorest of food, can work for less than the American laborer is entitled to receive for his daily toil? Put the two classes of laborers side by side, and the cheap servile labor pulls down the more manly toil to its level. The free white labor never could compete with the slave labor of the South. In the Chinaman the white laborer finds only another form of servile competition—in some aspects more revolting and corrupting than African slavery. Whoever contends for the unrestricted immigration of Chinese coolies contends for that system of toil which blights the prospects of the white laborer—dooming him to starvation wages, killing his ambition by rendering his struggles hopeless, and ending in a plodding and pitiable poverty.

"Nor is it a truthful answer to say that this danger is remote, Remote it may be for Mr. Garriron, for Boston, and for New England, but it is instant and pressing on the Pacific Slope. Already the Chinese male adults on that coast are well-nigh as numerous as the white voters of California, and it is conceded that a Chinese emigrant can be placed in San Francisco for one-half the amount required to transport a man from the Mississippi Valley to the Pacific coast, and for one-third what it requires for a New Yorker or

New Englander to reach California or Oregon. The late Caleb Cushing, who had carefully studied the Chinese question ever since his mission to Peking in 1842, maintained that unless resisted by the United States the first general famine in China would be followed by an emigration to California that would swamp the white race."

The probability is great that official endorsement would incalculably increase the immigration from China, the population of which is practically inexhaustible. So far as treaty obligations are concerned, Mr. Blaine holds that the Burlingame treaty did not in any sense contemplate such incoming of Chinese as has been realized, most of it being a forced departure to avoid punishment and penalties, and in no sense voluntary, and much of the remainder being from the pauper coolie class, which is never to be desired as an element of population in this or any civilized land.

"A great deal," continues Mr. Blaine, "has been said about the danger to our trade if China should resort to some form of retaliation. The natural and pertinent retaliation is to restrict American immigration to China. Against that we will enter no protest, and should have no right to do so. The talk about China closing her ports to our trade is made only by those who do not understand the question. Last year the total amount of our exports to all Chinese ports, outside

of Hong Kong, was but $692,000. I have called Hong Kong a Chinese port, but every child knows that it is under British control, and if we were at war with China to-day Hong Kong would be as open to us as Liverpool. To speak of China punishing us by suspending trade is only the suggestion of dense ignorance. We pay China an immense balance in coin, and probably we always shall do it. But if the trade question had the importance which some have erroneously attributed to it, I would not seek its continuance by permitting a vicious immigration of Chinese coolies. The Bristol merchants cried out that commerce would be ruined if England persisted in destroying the slave trade. But history does not record that England sacrificed her honor by yielding to the cry,"

Returning again to the relation of this subject to the labor question, Mr. Blaine says: "There is not a laboring man from the Penobscot to the Sacramento who would not feel aggrieved, outraged, burdened, crushed, by being forced into competition with the labor and the wages of the Chinese coolie. For one I will never consent by my vote or my voice to drive the intelligent workingmen of America to that competition and that degradation."

CHAPTER XIX.

AMERICAN SHIP-BUILDING AND COMMERCE.

How earnestly Mr. Blaine pleaded for the revival of American ship-building and commerce was shown briefly in the chapter presenting him as an American of the Americans. This vital subject is very dear to his heart, and his eloquent tongue has often plead for it. In January, 1881, he replied to Senator Beck, of Kentucky, who had made a speech in favor of admitting free of duty foreign ships built to American Registers. This reply was made on the spot and without specific preparation or data, except such as memory recalled at the moment. Having referred to the concession of Senator Beck, that his proposal did look toward a permanent dependence upon England for our ships, Mr. Blaine continued:

"It is a fact equally remarkable that for the past twenty-five years—or make it only for the past twenty years, from the beginning of the war to this hour, the Congress of the United States has not done one solitary thing to uphold the navigation interests of the United States. Decay has been observed going on steadily from year to year. The great march forward of our commer-

cial rival of old has been witnessed and everywhere recognized, and the representatives of the people of the United States have sat in their two houses of legislation as dumb as though they could not speak, and have not offered a single remedy or a single aid. And this has gone on until now the Senator from Kentucky rises in his seat and proposes to make a proclamation of perpetual future dependence of this country upon England for such commerce as she may enjoy, holding up as models to us Germany, Italy, and the other European countries that are as absolutely dependent upon Great Britain for what commerce they enjoy as the District of Columbia is for its legislation upon the Congress of the United States.

"During these years, in which Congress has not stepped forward to do one thing for the foreign commerce of this country, for all that vast external transportation whose importance the Senator from Kentucky has not exaggerated, but has strongly depicted, the same Congress has passed ninety-two acts in aid of internal transportation by rail; has given 200,000,000 acres of the public lands, worth to-day a thousand million dollars in money, and has added $70,000,000 in cash, and yet, I repeat, it has extended the aid of scarcely a single dollar, and has not appropriated a single acre to build up our foreign commerce.

"Mr. President, *fas est ab hoste doceri;* it is always lawful to be taught by an enemy. Great Britain has been our great commercial rival, and since the first Cunard steamship came into Boston, just about forty years ago, when Great Britain, seeing that steam was to play so great and commanding a part in the navigation of the world first made her venture, from that time down to the close of 1878, she had paid from her treasury, to aid great steamship lines all over the world, a sum exceeding forty million pounds sterling, more than two hundred millions of American dollars. I know it is a favorite argument with those who occupy the position of the honorable Senator from Kentucky that Great Britain started upon this plan and followed it for a long period of years, and afterward abandoned it. Sir, she has never abandoned it. She has only abandoned its extension to those lines that were strong enough to go alone, and the British post-office report for the year 1879 shows that under the despised and ridiculed head of postal aid, to which the honorable Senator from Kentucky was pleased to refer with such sneers, Great Britain paid last year £783,000, well-nigh four million dollars in coin.

"France gets her steamships from England. France has adopted the commercial policy which the honorable Senator from Kentucky thinks would be the revival of the American shipping interest; but does France, by the mere fact of get-

ting her ships built at Birkenhead, or on the Clyde, abandon the plan, which has been for thirty years in operation under her government, of aiding her ships? Why, sir, last year France paid 23,000,000 francs—more than four and a half million dollars—to aid her steamship lines. And when the celebrated line of France, the company known as Messageries Imperiale, competed too sharply in the Mediterranean waters after the opening of the Suez Canal, when that great French company competed with the Peninsular and Oriental Company of England, and was likely to endanger its supremacy by a sharp rivalry, Great Britain promptly stepped forward and added £100,000 to the Peninsular and Oriental subsidy. That is the way Great Britain has abandoned the idea of aiding her great commercial interests!

"Italy, that is hemmed in upon a lake, with a territory that does not touch either of the great oceans, is running up largely in steam-navigation; Italy last year paid 8,000,000 francs; and even Austria, that enjoys but a single seaport on the upper end of the Adriatic, pays $500,000 toward stimulating commercial ventures from Trieste. Now, the United States cannot succeed in this great international struggle without adopting exactly the same mode that has achieved victory for France. What is it? It is not to help A B or C D or E F or anybody else by name, neither Mr. John Roach, nor Mr. John Doe, nor Mr.

Richard Roe, but to make a great and comprehensive policy that shall give to every company a pledge of aid from the Government of so much per mile for such a term of years. Let the American merchants feel that the Government of the United States is behind them. Let the United States take from her Treasury per annum the $4,000,000 that Great Britain is paying as a postscript to her $200,000,000 of investment; let the United States but take $400,000 per annum—and that is not a great sum for this opulent country—let that be used as a fund to stimulate any company from any port of the United States to any foreign port, and, without being a prophet or the son of one, I venture to predict that you will see that long-deferred, much-desired event, the revival of the American merchant marine."

Mr. Blaine followed by urging that our costly and useless Navy Yard system be abolished in the main, and its cost be devoted to the promotion of American shipping. After further illustration of his subject, he finally said:

"It is idle to fight against the inventions of the world; it is idle for us to fold our arms and suppose that wooden vessels are to maintain anything like the importance they have hitherto had in the commerce of the world. I think I understand something of that subject. I have the honor to be from the state that has built more wooden vessels than all the rest of this Union

beside, I believe. Within thirty miles of my own residence is a town of only ten thousand people, which is the largest wooden ship-building place on the globe to-day. I know some little of that subject; and while the days of wooden-ships are by no means over, while they will be a great and needful auxiliary in the commence of the world, yet it is manifest and is proven that the great highways of international commerce, such as the North Atlantic, the West India seas, the route from San Francisco to Asia, that from San Francisco to Melborne, and in various and sundry and divers other directions, will be occupied, and occupied almost to the exclusion of sailing-vessels, by the ocean steamers. The United States can take a great part in that race; they can take a great part in it just whenever they make up their minds that the instrumentality by which England conquered is the very one which we must use; they can take it whenever they make up their minds that a mercantile marine and naval establishment must grow and go together hand in hand, and that the Congress of the United States is derelict in its duty if it passes another naval appropriation bill without accompanying it in some form with some wise and forecasting provision looking also to the upbuilding of the American merchant marine."

Two years previous to the discussion described above, Mr. Blaine put himself very decisively on

record in an extended speech in the Senate favoring a reduction of the Navy and encouraging American shipping. He had presented two amendments, one looking to a reduction in the number of Navy officers to the lowest point consistent with the authorized size of the Navy, and also to the reduction of the number of our navy yards, provided that the efficiency of the naval establishment of the country should not thereby be impaired. The other amendment provided that appointments to the rank of midshipman, from graduates of the United States Naval Academy, should be made only as vacancies occurred, and only on the basis of their standing at graduation.

The speech reviewed exhaustively the facts concerning our navy and navy yards as then existing, comparing them with the establishments of other great naval powers, and showing the disadvantage against our methods. Having shown the good ground presumably existing in favor of retrenchment in the navy, Mr. Blaine addressed himself to its allied topic, the development of the American mercantile marine. He said:

"Three-fourths, I do not know but I may overstate it, but certainly one-half the report of the Secretary of the Navy is devoted to the commerce of the country, and a very able report it is. It does him honor. I certainly am not out of order in discussing on the naval bill that to which the head of the department himself devotes so large

a portion of his report. I say again, that what may be saved out of the naval appropriation will do that which I have already adverted to for American commerce. We do not show any of this, can I call it stinginess, in any other department. We have given 200,000,000 acres of public land to railroads; we have now given $60,000,000 in money; and taking the value of those lands and the value of that money, and adding them together, it is safe to say that we have endowed railroads in this country with $500,000,000.

"From 1846 to 1871 the Congress of the United States passed ninety-one acts for promoting the building of railroads. There has not been much legislation since 1871. There has been a reaction against the policy, but from 1846 to 1871, I repeat, a period of twenty-five years, the Congress of the United States passed ninety-one different acts, and endowed the railroad system of this country with $500,000,000 of money, and that $500,000,000 of money produced more than $5,000,000,000 of money in this country. My judgment is that the Congress of the United States in everything they did in that respect did wisely. They cheapened freights. Clinton's ditch, as it used to be called, was sneered at when it was an experiment, but the minute the water was let into it it reduced the freights that had been $100 from Buffalo to New York down to $7 a ton;

and it is not an exaggeration to say that at that day, before railroads were among us, the water that was let in from Lake Erie to that canal added $100,000,000 to the value of the farms west of it.

"As individuals, cities, towns, counties, states, a nation, we have exerted ourselves to the utmost point of enterpise and vigor to build up railroads. We have a system that outruns all the world, and with great trunk lines threading the continent, north, south, east and west, in every direction. The very moment we reach the ocean limit, we seem to think we have done our duty, and that when we have got transportation to that point it no longer interests us, and we can safely give that over to the foreigner. Why, from Chicago to Liverpool is one direct line. I wonder how it would sound if Mr. Vanderbilt, who is running a line of steamships manned by foreign men, commanded by foreign officers, built in foreign yards, whose money earnings go entirely outside of this country, were to apply that to the New York Central Railroad, and select all the brakemen and switchmen and conductors and tenders and officers on the Central Railroad from foreigners; to put on it locomotives that are all made in England; to let all its earnings be exported. Such a policy would not be one particle more detrimental and destructive to the interests of this country than for us when that Central Railroad had touched salt water with all the countless pro-

ducts of the fertile West to give up all the profits of participation in the transportation of them beyond. From Chicago to Liverpool is a route of four thousand miles. We operate one thousand miles of it and give three thousand miles to the foreigner.

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"Mr. President, I will state my views on this subject, and I shall take the privilege of bringing the Senate to some vote that will test its sense on that question. My idea is that the Government of the United States should give to any man or company of men aid from the treasury of the United States if he or they shall establish and maintain a line of steamships to any foreign port, or I might limit it to European, South American, and Asiatic ports. I would invite competition from San Francisco, from Portland, Oregon, from Galveston, from New Orleans, from Mobile, from Savannah, Charleston, Wilmington, Norfolk, Baltimore, New York, Boston, Portland, and everywhere. I would let all come in who can sustain it. The touchstone is what will be sustained by the trade, and that you can safely leave to the instinct and to the knowledge of American commercial men."

CHAPTER XX.

MUNICIPAL DEBT.

In an address upon Municipal Debt, Mr. Blaine reviewed the history of these encumbrances, in all lands, and then spoke of the debts incurred by nations, states, counties, and cities or towns. These forms of public debts, he pronounced a "quadruplicate burden" to carry which every man and every piece of property, in some way must contribute its share. "When the city is pledging its credit," said Mr. Blaine, "it seems to forget that a heavy debt is already upon the county of which it forms an integral part; the county freely incurs debt without apparently remembering that every estate in it is already encumbered by a direct tax to pay the interest on a debt of the State; and the State too often makes lavish use of its credit without pausing to reflect that every one of its citizens is already burdened by the tax which he is paying to liquidate the debt of the nation. And when in the end nation, and State, and county, and city have each and all imposed their burdens, the citizen finds that while the tax is increased fourfold, the property to meet it has not expe-

rienced a similar development and growth." This power of indefinitely contracting municipal debt, was amply illustrated, and its folly scathingly exposed as the orator proceeded.

In approaching the practical conclusions of this whole matter, the distinguished speaker said:

"In regard to the aggregate Municipal debt of the country, it is not of course to be inferred that it could all have been wisely avoided. Credit, prudently used and safely guarded, is one of the great engines of modern civilization and advancement, and with Municipal Governments its uses at times seems imperatively demanded. In many cases the public health has required that debt be contracted for supplies of pure water and for systems of drainage and sewerage, and occasionally for other forms of public improvement essential to the growth of the community. But in the main, I think our cities have been too ready to draw on the future, too ready to pledge the 'lives and fortunes' of posterity to the payment of a debt which the generation contracting it is unable to discharge. Expensive Municipal buildings, loan of credit to outside enterprises, not needed and often visionary, have led in some large cities to a growth of debt for which there is no corresponding return of pecuniary profit, and no adequate advantage in any form. It is so easy to obtain Legislative authority to contract debts; it is so easy to sell a good city bond to the capitalist who highly prizes

such forms of security; it is so easy to roll up a debt to be taken care of by those who come after us, instead of levying a severe tax to be paid by ourselves; in short, it is so easy and, alas! so natural to have a smooth, enjoyable time to-day, thinking little of the ills that may overtake us on the morrow."

The influences of such debts in diverting capital which might otherwise be actively employed and in unreasonably advancing the rate of interest were next discussed, and thus the way was prepared for the question, What is the remedy? To this query Mr. Blaine gave answer as follows: "First and foremost, an awakened, active, well-balanced public judgment, which will suggest, demand and enforce a wise caution and conservative course on this subject. I have no patent remedy to propose, and yet I venture to suggest that the Legislatures of many States have altogether too large a power to create debt without referring the subject to the people for their primary consideration. Perhaps I may entertain a pre-judgment on this particular phase of the question in favor of the stringent provision in the Constitution of my own State, where the Legislature has no power to incur a dollar's debt except for war purposes, under the pressure of actual danger, and where an amendment to the Constitution proposed by two-thirds of the Legislature and then submitted to a vote of the people, is a pre-

requisite for pledging the credit of the State for any other purpose whatever.

"It might also be a wise and salutary provision to define in State Constitutions the precise ends for which municipal credit should be used—limiting those uses to proper and restricted objects, and forbidding in any event the creation of a debt beyond a specified per centage of the official valuation of the city or town; providing at the same time a judicious safeguard against the overlapping of county debts, so that while the town was guarding its credit with care it should not be involved in the embarrassment caused by an extravagant extension of the credit of the county.

"And finally, as a governing principle, it would be well to apply to all State, county and municipal debts, the wise precaution contained in that famous and well-remembered rule laid down by Mr. Jefferson as the basis of all sound national credit:

"'Never consent to borrow a dollar without laying a tax at the same instant, for paying the interest annually, and the principal within a given term; and consider that tax as pledged to the creditors on the public faith. On such a pledge as this, sacredly observed, a government may always command, on a reasonable interest, all the lendable money of its citizens; whilst the necessity of an equivalent tax is a salutary warning to them and their constituents against oppression, bankruptcy, and its inevitable result, revolution.'"

CHAPTER XXI.

IRREDEEMABLE PAPER CURRENCY.

On the money question Mr. Blaine stands among the soundest and most advanced financiers, and has always stood there. In addition to illustrations already given of this fact some points may be cited from his speech on this subject, which was delivered in the House of Representatives, February 10th, 1876, a date prior to the resumption of specie payment in our land. The financial situation of the day was thus stated in the opening paragraph of the speech: "For more than two years the country has been suffering from prostration in business; confidence returns but slowly; trade revives only partially; and to-day, with capital unproductice and labor unemployed, we find ourselves in the midst of an agitation respecting the medium with which business transactions shall be carried on. Until this question is definitely adjusted it is idle to expect that full measure of prosperity to which the energies of our people and the resources of the land entitle us.

"If," said Mr. Blaine as he proceeded on this topic, "there was any one principle that was

rooted and grounded in the minds of our earlier statesmen, it was the evil of paper-money; and no candid man of any party can read the Constitution of the United States and not be convinced that its formers intended to protect and defend our people from the manifold perils of an irredeemable currency. Nathaniel Macon, one of the purest and best of American statesman, himself a soldier of the Revolution and a member of Congress continuously during the administration of our first six Presidents, embracing in all a period of nearly forty years, expressed the whole truth when he declared in the Senate that 'this was a hard-money government, founded by hard-money men, who had themselves seen and felt the evil of paper-money and meant to save their posterity from it.'

"To this uniform adherence to the specie standard the crisis of the Rebellion forced an exception. In January, 1862, with more than half a million of men in arms, with a daily expenditure of nearly two millions of dollars, the Government suddenly found itself without money. Customs yielded but little, internal taxes had not yet been levied, public credit was feeble, if not paralyzed, our armies had met with one signal reverse and nowhere with marked success, and men's minds were filled with gloom and apprehension. The one supreme need of the hour was money, and money the Government did not have. What,

then, should be done—rather, what could be done? The ordinary Treasury note had been tried and failed, and those already issued were discredited and below the value of the bills of country banks. The Government in this great and perilous need promptly called to its aid a power never before exercised. It authorized the issue of one hundred and fifty millions of notes, and declared them to be a legal tender for all debts, public and private, with two exceptions.

"The ablest lawyers who sustained this measure did not find warrant for it in the text of the Constitution, but like the late Senator Fessenden, of my own State, placed it on the ground of 'absolute, overwhelming necessity;' and that illustrious Senator declared that, 'the necessity existing, he had no hesitation.' Indeed, sir, to hesitate was to be lost, for the danger was that, if Congress prolonged the debate on points of constitutional construction, its deliberation might be interrupted by the sound of artillery on the opposite shore of the Potomac. The Republican Senators and representatives, therefore, dismissing all doubts and casuistry, stood together for the country."

CHAPTER XXII.

PURITY OF THE BALLOT-BOX.

On December 11th, 1878, Mr. Blaine delivered one of his most effective speeches. A resolution introduced by himself was then pending. It provided for inquiry into certain alleged frauds in elections then recently held in the Southern States. Mr. Blaine opened by rehearsing the current rumors concerning these abuses and pressed his proposed inquiry in these words:

"The issue thus raised before the country, Mr. President, is not one of mere sentiment for the rights of the negro—though far distant be the day when the rights of any American citizen, however black or however poor, shall form the mere dust of the balance in any controversy; nor is the issue one that involves the waving of the "bloody shirt," to quote the elegant venacular of Democratic vituperation; nor still further is the issue as now presented only a question of the equality of the black voter of the South with the white voter of the South; the issue, Mr. President, has taken a far wider range, one of portentous magnitude; and that is, whether the white voter of the North shall be equal to the white voter of

the South in shaping the policy and fixing the destiny of this country; or whether, to put it still more baldly, the white man who fought in the ranks of the Union Army shall have as weighty and influential a vote in the Government of the Republic as the white man who fought in the ranks of the rebel army. The one fought to uphold, the other to destroy, the Union of the States, and to-day he who fought to destroy is a far more important factor in the Government of the nation than he who fought to uphold it.

"Let me illustrate my meaning by comparing groups of States of the same representative strength North and South. Take the States of South Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana. They send seventeen Representatives to Congress. Their aggregate population is composed of ten hundred and thirty-five thousand whites and twelve hundred and twenty-four thousand colored; the colored being nearly two hundred thousand in excess of the whites. Of the seventeen representatives, then, it is evident that nine were apportioned to these States by reason of their colored population, and only eight by reason of their white population; and yet in the choice of the entire seventeen Representatives the colored voters had no more voice or power than their remote kindred on the shores of Senegambia or on the Gold Coast. The ten hundred and thirty-five thousand white people had the sole and

absolute choice of the entire seventeen Representatives. In contrast, take two States in the North, Iowa and Wisconsin, with seventeen Representatives. They have a white population of two million, two hundred and forty-seven thousand—considerably more than double the entire white population of the three Southern States I have named. In Iowa and Wisconsin, therefore, it takes one hundred and thirty-two thousand white population to send a Representative to Congress, but in South Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana, every sixty thousand white people send a Representative. In other words, sixty thousand white people in those Southern States have precisely the same political power in the government of the country that one hundred and thirty-two thousand white people have in Iowa and Wisconsin."

Mr. Blaine then proceeded to quote from the fourteenth amendment, and to show therefrom that this superior power of the Southern voter was not by reason of law or justice, but in disregard and defiance of both. He said:

"The patent, undeniable intent of this provision was that if any class of voters were denied, or in any way abridged in their right of suffrage, then the class so denied or abridged should not be counted in the basis of representation; or, in other words, that no State or States should gain a large increase of representation in Congress by reason of counting any class of population not

permitted to take part in electing such Representatives. But the construction given to this provision is that before any forfeiture of representation can be enforced the denial or abridgment of suffrage must be the result of a law specifically enacted by the State. Under this construction every negro voter may have his suffrage absolutely denied or fatally abridged by the violence, actual or threatened, of irresponsible mobs, or by frauds and deceptions of State officers from the Governor down to the last election clerk, and then, unless some State law can be shown that authorizes the denial or abridgment, the State escapes all penalty or peril of reduced representation. This construction may be upheld by the courts, ruling on the letter of the law, "which killeth," but the spirit of justice cries aloud against the evasive and atrocious conclusion that deals out oppression to the innocent and shields the guilty from the legitimate consequences of wilful transgression.

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"The political power thus appropriated by Southern Democrats, by reason of the negro population, amounts to thirty-five Representatives in Congress. It is massed almost solidly and offsets the great State of New York; or Pennsylvania and New Jersey together; or the whole of New England; or Ohio and Indiana united; or the combined strength of Illinois, Minnesota, Kansas, California, Nevada, Nebraska, Colorado,

and Oregon. The seizure of this power is wanton usurpation; it is flagrant outrage; it is violent perversion of the whole theory of republican government. It inures solely to the present advantage, and yet, I believe, to the permanent dishonor of the Democratic party. It is by reason of this trampling down of human rights, this ruthless seizure of unlawful power that the Democratic party holds the popular branch of Congress to-day, and will, in less than ninety days, have control of this body also, thus grasping the entire legislative department of the Government through the unlawful capture of the Southern States.

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"And this injustice is wholly unprovoked. I doubt if it be in the power of the most searching investigation to show that in any Southern state during the period of Republican control any legal voter was ever debarred from the freest exercise of his suffrage. Even the revenges which would have leaped into life with many who despised the negro were buried out of sight with a magnanimity which the 'superior race' fail to follow and seem reluctant to recognize. I know it is said in retort of such charges against the Southern elections as I am now reviewing that unfairness of equal gravity prevails in Northern elections. I hear it in many quarters, and read it in the papers, that in the late exciting election in Massachusetts intimidation

and bull-dozing, if not so rough and rancorous as in the South, were yet as widespread and effective.

"I have read, and yet I refuse to believe, that the distinguished gentleman, who made an energetic but unsuccessful canvass for the governorship of that state, has indorsed and approved these charges, and I have accordingly made my resolution broad enough to include their thorough investigation. I am not demanding fair elections in the South without demanding fair elections in the North also. But venturing to speak for the New England States, of whose laws and customs I know something, I dare assert that in the late election in Massachusetts, or any of her neighboring Commonwealths, it will be impossible to find even one case where a voter was driven from the polls, where a voter did not have the fullest, fairest, freest opportunity to cast the ballot of his choice, and have it honestly and faithfully counted in the returns. Suffrage on this continent was first made universal in New England, and in the administration of their affairs her people have found no other appeal necessary than that which is addressed to their honesty of conviction and to their intelligent self-interest. If there be anything different to disclose, I pray you show it to us that we may amend our ways.

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"I know something of public opinion in the

North. I know a great deal about the views, wishes and purposes of the Republican party of the nation. Within that entire great organization there is not one man, whose opinion is entitled to be quoted, that does not desire peace and harmony and friendship and a patriotic and fraternal union between the North and the South. This wish is spontaneous, instinctive, universal, throughout the Northern States; and yet, among men of character and sense, there is surely no need of attempting to deceive ourselves as to the precise truth. First pure, then peaceable. Gush will not remove a grievance, and no disguise of state rights will close the eyes of our people to the necessity of correcting a great national wrong. Nor should the South make the fatal mistake of concluding that injustice to the negro is not also injustice to the white man; nor should it ever be forgotten that for the wrongs of both a remedy will assuredly be found. The war, with all its costly sacrifices, was fought in vain useless equal rights for all classes be established in all the states of the Union; and now, in words which are those of friendship, however differently they may be accepted, I tell the men of the South here on this floor, and beyond this chamber, that even if they could strip the negro of his constitutional rights they can never permanently maintain the inequality of white men in this nation; they can never make a white man's vote in the South doubly as

powerful in the administration of the government as a white man's vote in the North.

"In a memorable debate in the House of Commons, Mr. Macaulay reminded Daniel O'Connell, when he was moving for repeal, that the English whigs had endured calumny, abuse, popular fury, loss of position, exclusion from Parliament, rather than the great agitator himself should be less than a British subject; and Mr. Macaulay warned him that they never would suffer him to be more. Let me now remind you that the Government under whose protecting flag we sit to-day sacrificed myriads of lives and expended thousands of millions of treasure that our countrymen of the South should remain citizens of the United States, having equal personal rights and equal political privileges with all other citizens. And I venture, now and here, to warn the men of the South, in the exact words of Macaulay, that we will never suffer them to be more!"

It need hardly be said that this brilliant conclusion was greeted with hearty applause, to suppress which required the vigorous use of the President's gavel. The plea was effective in securing the desired investigation, and it is characteristic of the frank, fearless and forcible manner in which Mr. Blaine meets every great question.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AN AFTER-DINNER SPEECH.

To make a good after-dinner speech has time out of mind been regarded as the crucial test of a genial, jovial, splendid soul. So much of the severer side of Mr. Blaine has been shown in the extracts from his speeches already given, that it might be supposed he was always the statesman and the orator. But he has a side of the very sunniest kind, and to illustrate it the occasion of the dinner of the New England Society, of New York, may be cited. At this distinguished gathering, on December 23d, 1878, the President of the Society, Mr. D. T. Appleton, introduced Mr. Blaine, not as a New Englander by birth, but as a fit representative of that section, and called upon him to respond to this toast:—"New England Character—Adapted to every requirement; it fits her sons not only to fill, but to adorn every station."

Mr. Blaine began his remarks thus: "The President has kindly relieved me from a personal explanation. I am only a brother-in-law. [Laughter.] And brothers-in-law are useful in families [renewed laughter], and in a New England family,

where modesty is the prevailing fault, and where you can rarely get one of the direct blood and descent to say anything in praise of his race, it is, perhaps, meet and proper that, unembarrassed by any consideration of personal prudery, I can speak my mind freely about you all. I never saw New England till I was a man grown, but I have lived more than half my life on its soil, and I have six children, who represent the ninth generation in descent from the old Massachusetts colonists. And I am not ashamed to say, Mr. President, in any presence, recollecting as I always do, with pride, my Pennsylvania birth and my Scotch and Scotch-Irish ancestry—I am not afraid or ashamed to say in any presence, that in the settlement of this continent, and the shaping and moulding of its institutions, the leading place, the chief merit belongs to New England. [Applause.] Why, every chapter of its history is weighty with momentous events. A small number came in 1620; there was no immigration to speak of till 1630; there was none after 1640. And the 21,000 men that came in those brief years are the progenitors of a race that includes one-third of the people of the United States of America. They are the progenitors of a race of people twice as numerous as all who spoke the English language in the world when they came to these shores."

Mr. Blaine having next sketched rapidly the deeds of the New England colonists and their

descendants, resumed his lighter vein again, saying: "Well, that this race has been abused and reviled, is, of course, inevitable. You remember the old gentleman in the London club. When he was fumbling with his watch chain, somebody, complimenting him on its strength, he said: 'Of course it is strong. There is nary a pickpocket in London as hasn't taken a tug at it in his day.' There is hardly anybody who has not taken a hand in abusing the Yankee race. I never heard it abused in quite so eloquent a manner as by our friend of the Central Railroad this evening. [Laughter.] Now, in enjoying the dinner of the New England Society of New York—and I almost catch my breath when I say the New England Society of New York—you do not know how we regard it in New England. There are a great many men in New England who aspire to get into Congress, first the House, and then the Senate and then the Cabinet, and then, under the inspiration of the strong air and the mountain scenery of Vermont, aspire still higher. [Turning round to Mr. Evarts—a movement which provoked loud laughter.] But that is only the few. The one thing which every boy, as he grows up in New England, however, looks forward to as the crowning glory of his life, is to dine some day with the New England Society of New York. Without this, his sum of human happiness is not complete. I have received your invitation for many years

past, but it has been my misfortune never to have been able to be present until now, and I am here this evening to acknowledge all the pleasure I enjoy in the present, and to express my regret for all that I have missed in the past!"

Here, again, Mr. Blaine indulged for a few moments in a more serious vein, and then said:— "Mr. President, I should like to see this splendid company seated at a typical New England feast of the olden time; a feast spread on tables that came over in the May Flower; you can find plenty of them! [Laughter] the guests seated on chairs that belonged to John Alden and Miles Standish; and no well-regulated New England family is without a broken assortment of them. [Loud laughter.] I should like to see a feast thus celebrated that should reproduce, as far as might be, the harder times and the coarser fare which they endured, that we, their descendants, and we, their friends, might enjoy the more bounteous and more elegant repast with which we are indulged to-day. And I should like, Mr. President, to impress upon every New Englander, whether seated at the primitive table of coarse fare or the modern table of costly luxury, that with one voice we echo the declarations of our distinguished friend, the Secretary of the Treasury, in favor of an honest dollar, and that with equal faith we believe in an honest ballot!"

Great and prolonged applause greeted this

utterance, after which the speaker closed with the following brilliant peroration :

" Mr. President, I thank you very sincerely, I thank you all, gentlemen of the New England Society, more than I can express, for the cordiality of your welcome. And in this brilliant scene, in this grand and delightful meeting, in this assemblage, surrounded with everything that gives comfort and grace and elegance to social life, in this meeting, protected by law, and itself representing law, let me recall one memory always present with me on such occasions, and that is the sadness—if sadness may be protruded upon a meeting such as this—the sadness which I feel when I remember the men who, in 1620, landed on the Plymouth shore, and did not survive the first year. For of all the men engaged in great and heroic contests, those, I think, are most to be commiserated and most to be sympathized with who, making all the sacrifices and enduring all the hardships, are not permitted to enjoy any of the triumphs or the blessings. It was Quincy who died before the first shot was fired in the Revolution he did so much to create ; it was Warren who died when the first shot was fired ; it was Reynolds who, when rallying his corps for the doubtful and critical battle of Gettysburg, fell before he knew its fate ; it was McPherson, in the great march to the sea, who lost his life before he knew the issue of that daring and almost romantic expedition. For

these and all such, from Plymouth Rock to the last battle-field of the rebellion, that perished in their pride, and perished before they knew that what they were dying for should succeed, I offer, and I am sure you will join with me in offering, our profound veneration, our respectful homage."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE PLUMED KNIGHT.

THE title of "Plumed Knight," for Mr. Blaine, at once struck the popular fancy, and was eagerly adopted. It seemed to express both his gallant and chivalric bearing, and that quality of leadership that lead his party to follow him as enthusiastically and victoriously as the army of Navarre did the white-decked hemlet of their King. An earlier allusion of the same sort is claimed for "Tom Fitch," the "silver-tongued orator" of the Pacific coast, but the general use of the phrase dates from the eloquent speech of Robert G. Ingersoll, in presenting Mr. Blaine's name to the Republican Convention of 1876. This will justify the insertion of the most important passages of the speech in these pages. Mr. Ingersoll then said:

"The Republicans of the United States demand as their leader in the great contest of 1876 a man of intelligence, a man of integrity, a man of well-known and approved political opinions. They demand a statesman. They demand a reformer after, as well as before, the election. They demand a politician in the highest, broadest, and best sense—a man of superb moral courage. They demand a man acquainted with public affairs, with the

wants of the people, with not only the requirements of the hour, but with the demands of the future. They demand a man broad enough to comprehend the relations of this Government to the other nations of the earth. They demand a man well versed in the powers, duties, and prerogatives of each and every department of this Government. They demand a man who will sacredly preserve the financial honor of the United States; one who knows enough to know that the national debt must be paid through the prosperity of this people; one who knows enough to know that all the financial theories in the world cannot redeem a single dollar; one who knows enough to know that all the money must be made, not by law, but by labor; one who knows enough to know that the people of the United States have the industry to make the money and the honor to pay it over just as fast as they make it.

"The Republicans of the United States demand a man who knows that prosperity and resumption, when they come, must come together; that when they come they will come, hand in hand, through the golden harvest fields; hand in hand by the whirling spindles and the turning wheels; hand in hand past the open furnace doors; hand in hand by the flaming forges; hand in hand by the chimneys filled with eager fire, greeted and grasped by the countless sons of toil. This money has to be dug out of the earth. You cannot make it by passing resolutions in a political convention.

"The Republicans of the United States want a man who knows that this Government should protect every citizen at home and abroad; who knows that any government that will not defend its defenders, and protect its protectors, is a disgrace to the map of the world. They

demand a man who believes in the eternal separation and divorcement of church and school. They demand a man whose political reputation is spotless as a star; but they do not demand that their candidate shall have a certificate of moral character signed by a confederate congress. The man who has, in full, heaped, and rounded measure, all these splendid qualifications, is the present grand and gallant leader of the Republican party—James G. Blaine.

"Our country, crowned with the vast and marvelous achievements of its first century, asks for a man worthy of the past and prophetic of her future; asks for a man who has the audacity of genius; asks for a man who has the grandest combination of heart, conscience, and brain beneath her flag—such a man is James G. Blaine. For the Republican host, led by this intrepid man, there can be no defeat.

"This is a grand year—a year filled with the recollections of the Revolution; filled with proud and tender memories of the past; with the sacred legends of liberty—a year in which the sons of freedom will drink from the fountains of enthusiasm—a year in which the people call for a man who has preserved in Congress what our soldiers won upon the field—a year in which they call for the man who has torn from the throat of treason the tongue of slander; for the man who has snatched the mask of Democracy from the hideous face of rebellion; for the man who, like an intellectual athlete, has stood in the arena of debate and challenged all comers, and who is still a total stranger to defeat.

"Like an armed warrior, like a plumed knight, James G. Blaine marched down the halls of the American Congress and threw his shining lance full and fair against the brazen foreheads of the defamers of his country and the

maligners of her honor. For the Republican party to desert this gallant leader now is as though an army should desert their general upon the field of battle.

"James G. Blaine is now and has been for years the bearer of the sacred standard of the Republican party. I call it sacred, because no human being can stand beneath its folds without becoming and without remaining free.

"Gentlemen of the Convention: In the name of the great Republic, the only Republic that ever existed upon this earth; in the name of all her defenders and of all her supporters; in the name of all her soldiers living; in the name of all her soldiers dead upon the field of battle, and in the name of those who perished in the skeleton clutch of famine at Andersonville and Libby, whose sufferings she so vividly remembers, Illinois—Illinois nominates for the next President of this country that prince of parliamentarians, that leader of leaders, James G. Blaine."

Mr. Blaine's knightly conquests have not been made on the fields of martial strife. Some, in their anxiety to disparage, may make this as a point against him and his conceded title, but though his pre-eminent abilities for statesmanship have kept him constantly in civil employment, it is certain that there is no warmer friend of the soldiers and sailors who actually did the fighting for the Union in their many bloody battles. From the very first outbreak of the war until he left Congress he was foremost in advocating every measure that could add to the efficiency of the armies in the field, comfort or reward the nation's brave defenders, and relieve their widows and

children from danger of want. His earnest sympathy made him from the first a sharer in all the aspirations, interests and wishes of the soldier on the field.

A volunteer officer who served with conspicuous usefulness recently said that what sent him to the war was the accidental hearing of a speech of Mr. Blaine's in the Maine legislature, in reply to the ablest constitutional lawyer in that body, who had denied the right of the Federal government to resist secession, and advocated a peace policy. Mr. Blaine was Speaker, but descended from the chair, and in eloquent words not only overturned the legal sophistries of his opponent, but set forth the duty of every true American in the impending crisis in a manner that roused the deepest and most effective enthusiasm. From that time there was no question about the aid of Maine in the vigorous prosecution of the war. So it will be found in examining Mr. Blaine's record throughout that he has always been on the side of the soldier, never against him, and so he will continue while life and energy remain to him, knightly in his spirit, soldierly in his deeds.

CHAPTER XXV.

OUT OF POLITICS.

As soon as President Arthur had passed the difficulties natural to such an unexpected beginning of a new Administration, and was in no danger of embarrassment from this cause Mr. Blaine pressed for an immediate acceptance of the resignation which he had tendered along with those of the other members of Mr. Garfield's cabinet. After such a year, even his iron constitution craved a release from care, if not from occupation, and he was anxious to return to private life.

It was a pleasant home to which he returned, endeared to him first of all by the society of his family, and, in a degree, only second to this, by the beloved company of his books, of which he has drawn around him the best of all ages. Works of art, also, are not missing from his walls. He does not regard the æsthetic rule that engravings and paintings should not hang in the same apartment, for there are engravings in every room, and paintings are not on that account excluded. The gem of them all is the picture of "Charles II. and his Court," painted by Sir Peter Lely in 1658, and which Mr. Blaine was fortunate

enough to acquire at the sale, a few years ago, of some old effects of Lord Baltimore. Among his curiosities is a large number of autographs, including those of Dickens, Thackeray, E. B. Lytton, Gladstone, Gambetta, and other famous cotemporaries, inscribed on pictures presented by themselves.

In this pleasant retirement, all the more enjoyable after twenty-five years of strife, Mr. Blaine found ample occupation in that historical work which he had proposed to himself some years before, and to which he devoted himself with the same thoroughness that has before been described as part of his character. For the first time, perhaps, he was a profound disappointment to his friends. Contented with his position, engrossed with his private interests and with flattering offers for literary work, beyond what he could execute in years by the utmost diligence, Mr. Blaine declined to take part in politics, even to aid his own candidacy for the highest office in the land. No entreaties by those who thought that he was defeating the hopes of his admirers could shake this resolution, and, as it turned out, he was wiser than they. Not disdaining the prospective nomination, yet largely grown indifferent to it, Mr. Blaine knew that it would come to him, if at all, by the spontaneous movement of the Republican masses, over-ruling those in control of the machinery of the party. This move-

ment he could not strengthen, but only perhaps weaken, by going down into the thick of the fray, and employing the same tactics as those who were eagerly seeking their own aggrandizement. So the voice of his party, calling him from his retirement, came to him, not exactly at the plow, like Cincinnatus, but swinging in a hammock on the lawn of his pleasant summer home at Augusta, and it was whispered through a telephone to the ear of his daughter, to whom it conveyed much more pleasurable excitement than to him.

Mr. Blaine's political associates insisted upon his assuming personal direction of the campaign, a task for which he was eminently fitted by his great abilities and his large personal experience. The struggle progressed, great vigor being shown on both sides, and great ability, too, but, unfortunately for all concerned, it quickly degenerated into vile and bitter personal abuse, and became one of the most offensive campaigns through which our country ever passed.

At the outcome, in November, the decision seemed poised in a balance for a few days, both parties claiming the victory, but Mr. Blaine had the sagacity to perceive that his opponent had won the day, and had the magnanimity promptly to call off the legions that still clamored for a decision in his favor. That Mr. Blaine's political associates reluctantly relinquished the power they so long had held was but natural, but Mr. Blaine

himself accepted the vote as his final release from the cares of state. Once more he resumed his quiet home life, and after adjusting his extended business relations he went abroad with members of his family to enjoy a long, restful season of foreign travel.

In Mr. Blaine's absence from the country his friends still continued to work for him and were sanguine for his nomination, believing that it would result in his triumphal elevation to the Presidency. There is little doubt that had Mr. Blaine maintained silence he would have been nominated by acclamation in the Chicago Convention; but early in the Convention year (1888) Mr. Blaine sent his famous Florence letter, in which, with all clearness, he positively withdrew his name from consideration for the Presidency. But so earnest were his friends in this country that they persisted in an interpretation of his letter which encouraged, rather than discouraged, his nomination

This sentiment grew as the time for the Convention approached, and it really seemed that he would certainly be nominated in spite of the Florence letter. Then came his Paris letter, making his meaning unmistakably clear. Still, many clung to him, and when the Republicans met at Chicago in June the confident expectation of many was that Mr. Blaine would yet be made the nominee. But he remained true to his first

utterances on the subject, and sent a decisive telegram from Edinburgh, which was read to the Convention by Mr. Boutelle, of Maine, and which effectually convinced the country that Mr. Blaine was not in the race for the Presidency. So the long-cherished hope of many staunch Republicans was given up, and James G. Blaine, by his own choice, remained in private life.

BLAINE'S ORATION

ON

JAMES A. GARFIELD.

By appointment of the National authorities, February 27th, 1882, was set apart for the official commemorative services of the lamented Garfield, and James G. Blaine was the orator of the occasion. All the dignitaries of the capital were present, and from the impressive address on the occasion the following paragraphs are selected:

No manly man feels anything of shame in looking back to early struggles with adverse circumstances, and no man feels a worthier pride than when he has conquered the obstacles in his progress. But no one of noble mold desires to be looked upon as having occupied a menial position, as having been repressed by a feeling of inferiority, or as having suffered the evils of poverty until relief was found at the hand of charity. General Garfield's youth presented no hardships which family love and family energy did not overcome, subjected him to no privations which he did not cheerfully accept, and left no memories save those which were recalled with delight and transmitted with profit and with pride.

Garfield's early opportunities for securing an education were extremely limited, and yet were sufficient to develop in him an intense desire to learn. He could read at three years of age, and each winter he had the advantage of the district school. He read all the books to be found within the circle of his acquaintance; some of them he got by heart. While yet in childhood he was a constant student of the Bible, and became familiar with its literature. The dignity and earnestness of his speech in his maturer life gave evidence of this early training. At eighteen years of age he was able to teach school, and thenceforward his ambition was to obtain a college education. To this end he bent all his efforts, working in the harvest field, at the carpenter's bench, and, in the winter season, teaching the common schools of the neighborhood. While thus laboriously occupied he found time to prosecute his studies, and was so successful that at twenty-two years of age he was able to enter the junior class at Williams College, then under the presidency of the venerable and honored Mark Hopkins, who, in the fullness of his powers, survives the eminent pupil to whom he was of inestimable service.

The history of Garfield's life to this period presents no novel features. He had undoubtedly shown perseverance, self-reliance, self-sacrifice, and ambition—qualities which, be it said for the honor of our country, are everywhere to be found

among the young men of America. But from his graduation at Williams onward, to the hour of his tragical death, Garfield's career was eminent and exceptional. Slowly working through his educational period, receiving his diploma when twenty-four years of age, he seemed at one bound to spring into conspicuous and brilliant success. Within six years he was successively president of a college, State Senator of Ohio, Major-General of the Army of the United States, and Representative-elect to the National Congress. A combination of honors so varied, so elevated, within a period so brief, and to a man so young, is without precedent or parallel in the history of the country.

Garfield's army life was begun with no other military knowledge than such as he had hastily gained from books in the few months preceding his march to the field. Stepping from civil life to the head of a regiment, the first order he received when ready to cross the Ohio, was to assume command of a brigade, and to operate as an independent force in Eastern Kentucky. His immediate duty was to check the advance of Humphrey Marshall, who was marching down the Big Sandy with the intention of occupying, in connection with other Confederate forces, the entire territory of Kentucky, and of precipitating the State into secession This was at the close of the year 186 . Seldom, if ever, has a young college professor been thrown into a more embarrassing and dis-

couraging position. He knew just enough of military science, as he expressed it himself, to measure the extent of his ignorance, and with a handful of men he was marching, in rough winter weather, into a strange country, among a hostile population, to confront a largely superior force under the command of a distinguished graduate of West Point, who had seen active and important service in two preceding wars.

The result of the campaign is matter of history. The skill, the endurance, the extraordinary energy shown by Garfield, the courage he imparted to his men, raw and untried as himself, the measures he adopted to increase his force and to create in the enemy's mind exaggerated estimates of his numbers, bore perfect fruit in the routing of Marshall, the capture of his camp, the dispersion of his force, and the emancipation of an important territory from the control of the Rebellion. Coming at the close of a long series of disasters to the Union arms, Garfield's victory had an unusual and extraneous importance, and in the popular judgment elevated the young commander to the rank of a military hero. With less than two thousand men in his entire command, with a mobilized force of only eleven hundred, without cannon, he had met an army of five thousand and defeated them, driving Marshall's forces successively from two strongholds of their own selection, fortified with abundant artillery. Major-

General Buell, commanding the Department of the Ohio, an experienced and able soldier of the Regular Army, published an order of thanks and congratulation on the brilliant result of the Big Sandy campaign, which would have turned the head of a less cool and sensible man than Garfield. Buell declared that his services had called into action the highest qualities of a soldier, and President Lincoln supplemented these words of praise by the more substantial reward of a brigadier-general's commission, to bear date from the day of his decisive victory over Marshall.

Early in 1863, Garfield was assigned to the highly important and responsible post of chief of staff to General Rosecrans, then at the head of the Army of the Cumberland. Perhaps in a great military campaign, no subordinate officer requires sounder judgment and quicker knowledge of men than the chief of staff to the commanding general. An indiscreet man in such a position can sow more discord, breed more jealousy, and disseminate more strife than any other officer in the entire organization. When General Garfield assumed his new duties he found various troubles already well developed, and seriously affecting the value and efficiency of the Army of the Cumberland. The energy, the impartiality, and the tact with which he sought to allay these dissensions, and to discharge the duties of his new and trying position, will always remain one of the most striking proofs of

his great versatility. His military duties closed on the memorable field of Chickamauga, a field which, however disastrous to the Union arms, gave to him the occasion of winning imperishable laurels. The very rare distinction was accorded him of a great promotion for his bravery on a field that was lost. President Lincoln appointed him a major-general in the army of the United States for gallant and meritorious conduct in the battle of Chickamauga.

The Army of the Cumberland was reorganized under the command of General Thomas, who promptly offered Garfield one of its divisions. He was extremely desirous to accept the position, but was embarrassed by the fact that he had, a year before, been elected to Congress, and the time when he must take his seat was drawing near. He preferred to remain in the military service, and had within his own breast the largest confidence of success in the wider field which his new rank opened to him. Balancing the arguments on the one side and the other, anxious to determine what was for the best, desirous above all things to do his patriotic duty, he was decisively influenced by the advice of President Lincoln and Secretary Stanton, both of whom assured him that he could, at that time, be of especial value in the House of Representatives. He resigned his commission of Major-General on the fifth day of December, 1863, and took his seat in the house of Representatives

on the seventh. He had served two years and four months in the army, and had just completed his thirty-second year.

The Thirty-Eighth Congress is pre-eminently entitled in history to the designation of the War Congress. It was elected while the war was flagrant, and every member was chosen upon the issues involved in the continuance of the struggle. The Thirty-Seventh Congress had, indeed, legislated to a large extent on war measures, but it was chosen before any one believed that secession of the States would be actually attempted. The magnitude of the work which fell upon its successor was unprecedented, both in respect to the vast sums of money raised for the support of the army and navy, and of the new and extraordinary powers of legislation which it was forced to exercise. Only twenty-four States were represented, and one hundred and eighty-two members were upon its roll. Among these were many distinguished party leaders on both sides, veterans in the public service, with established reputations for ability, and with that skill which comes only from parliamentary experience. Into this assemblage of men Garfield entered without special preparation, and it might almost be said unexpectedly. The question of taking command of a division of troops under General Thomas, or taking his seat in Congress, was kept open till the last moment—so late, indeed, that the resignation

of his military commission and his appearance in the House were almost contemporaneous. He wore the uniform of a Major-General of the United States Army on Saturday, and on Monday, in civilian's dress, he answered to the roll-call as a Representative in Congress from the State of Ohio.

With possibly a single exception, Garfield was the youngest member in the House when he entered, and was but seven years from his college graduation. But he had not been in his seat sixty days before his ability was recognized and his place conceded. He stepped to the front with the confidence of one who belonged there. The House was crowded with strong men of both parties; nineteen of them have since been transferred to the Senate, and many of them have served with distinction in the gubernatorial chairs of their respective States, and on foreign missions of great consequence; but among them all none grew so rapidly, none so firmly as Garfield. As is said by Trevelyan of his parliamentary hero, Garfield succeeded "because all the world in concert could not have kept him in the background, and because when once in the front he played his part with a prompt intrepidity and a commanding ease that were but the outward symptoms of the immense reserves of energy on which it was in his power to draw." Indeed, the apparently reserved force which Garfield possessed was one of his great

characteristics. He never did so well but that it seemed he could easily have done better. He never expended so much strength but that he seemed to be holding additional power at call. This is one of the happiest and rarest distinctions of an effective debater, and often counts for as much in persuading an assembly as the eloquent and elaborate argument.

The great measure of Garfield's fame was filled by his service in the House of Representatives. His military life, illustrated by honorable performance, and rich in promise, was, as he himself felt, prematurely terminated, and necessarily incomplete. Speculation as to what he might have done in a field where the great prizes are so few, cannot be profitable. It is sufficient to say that, as a soldier, he did his duty bravely; he did it intelligently; he won an enviable fame, and he retired from the service without blot or breath against him. As a lawyer, though admirably equipped for the profession, he can scarcely be said to have entered on its practice. The few efforts he made at the bar were distinguished by the same high order of talent which he exhibited on every field where he was put to the test, and if a man may be accepted as a competent judge of his own capacities and adaptations, the law was the profession to which Garfield should have devoted himself. But fate ordained otherwise, and his reputation in history will rest largely upon his service in the House of Repre-

sentatives, to a place in which he was chosen nine consecutive terms.

Garfield's nomination to the Presidency, while not predicted or anticipated, was not a surprise to the country. His prominence in Congress, his solid qualities, his wide reputation, strengthened by his then recent election as Senator from Ohio, kept him in the public eye as a man occupying the very highest rank among those entitled to be called statesmen. It was not mere chance that brought him this high honor. "We must," says Mr. Emerson, "reckon success a constitutional trait. If Eric is in robust health, and has slept well, and is at the top of his condition, and thirty years old at his departure from Greenland, he will steer west, and his ships will reach Newfoundland. But take Eric out, and put in a stronger and bolder man, and the ships will sail six hundred, one thousand, fifteen hundred miles farther, and reach Labrador and New England. There is no chance in results."

As a candidate, Garfield steadily grew in popular favor. He was met with a storm of detraction at the very hour of his nomination, and it continued with increasing volume and momentum until the close of his victorous campaign:—

> "No might nor greatness in mortality
> Can censure 'scape; back-wounding calumny
> The whitest virtue strikes. What king so strong
> Can tie the gall up in the slanderous tongue?"

Under it all he was calm, and strong, and confident; never lost his self-possession, did no unwise act, spoke no hasty or ill-considered word. Indeed, nothing in his whole life is more remarkable or more creditable than his bearing through those five full months of vituperation—a prolonged agony of trial to a sensitive man, a constant and cruel draft upon the powers of moral endurance. The great mass of these unjust imputations passed unnoticed, and with the general debris of the campaign fell into oblivion. But in a few instances the iron entered his soul, and he died with the injury unforgotten, if not unforgiven.

One aspect of Garfield's candidacy was unprecedented. Never before, in the history of partisan contests in this country, had a successful Presidential candidate spoken freely on passing events and current issues. To attempt anything of the kind seemed novel, rash, and even desperate. The older class of voters recalled the unfortunate Alabama letter, in which Mr. Clay was supposed to have signed his political death warrant. They remembered also the hot-tempered effusion by which General Scott lost a large share of his popularity before his nomination, and the unfortunate speeches which rapidly consumed the remainder. The younger voters had seen Mr. Greeley in a series of vigorous and original addresses, preparing the pathway for his own defeat. Unmindful of these warnings, unheeding the ad-

vice of friends, Garfield spoke to large crowds as he journeyed to and from New York in August, to a great multitude in that city, to delegations and deputations of every kind that called at Mentor during the summer and autumn. With innumerable critics, watchful and eager to catch a phrase that might be turned into odium or ridicule, or a sentence that might be distorted to his own or his party's injury, Garfield did not trip or halt in any one of his seventy speeches. This seems all the more remarkable when it is remembered that he did not write what he said, and yet spoke with such logical consecutiveness of thought, and such admirable precision of phrase as to defy the accident of misreport, and the malignity of misrepresentation.

In the beginning of his Presidential life, Garfield's experience did not yield him pleasure or satisfaction. The duties that engross so large a portion of the President's time were distasteful to him, and were unfavorably contrasted with his legislative work. "I have been dealing all these years with ideas," he impatiently exclaimed one day, "and here I am dealing only with persons. I have been heretofore treating of the fundamental principles of government, and here I am considering all day whether A or B shall be appointed to this or that office." He was earnestly seeking some practical way of correcting the evils arising from the distribution of overgrown and unwieldy pat-

ronage—evils always appreciated and often discussed by him, but whose magnitude had been more deeply impressed upon his mind since his accession to the Presidency. Had he lived, a comprehensive improvement in the mode of appointments would have been proposed by him.

Garfield's ambition for the success of his administration was high. With strong caution and conservatism in his nature, he was in no danger of attempting rash experiments or of resorting to the empiricism of statesmanship. But he believed that renewed and closer attention should be given to questions affecting the material interests and commercial prospects of fifty millions of people. He believed that our continental relations, extensive and undeveloped as they are, involved responsibility, and could be cultivated into profitable friendship or be abandoned to harmless indifference or lasting enmity. He believed with equal confidence that an essential forerunner to a new era of national progress must be a feeling of contentment in every section of the Union, and a generous belief that the benefits and burdens of government would be common to all. Himself a conspicuous illustration of what ability and ambition may do under republican institutions, he loved his country with a passion of patriotic devotion, and every waking thought was given to her advancement. He was an American in all his aspirations, and he looked to the destiny and

influence of the United States with the philosophic composure of Jefferson and the demonstrative confidence of John Adams.

The religious element in Garfield's character was deep and earnest. In his early youth, he espoused the faith of the Disciples, a sect of that great Baptist Communion, which, in different ecclesiastical establishments, is so numerous and so influential throughout all parts of the United States. But the broadening tendency of his mind and his active spirit of inquiry were early apparent and carried him beyond the dogmas of sect and the restraints of association. In selecting a college in which to continue his education he rejected Bethany, though presided over by Alexander Campbell, the greatest preacher of his Church. His reasons were characteristic: first, that Bethany leaned too heavily towards slavery; and, second, that being himself a Disciple and the son of Disciple parents, he had little acquaintance with people of other beliefs, and he thought it would make him more liberal, quoting his own words, both in his religious and general views, to go into a new circle and be under new influences.

The liberal tendency which he anticipated as the result of wider culture was fully realized. He was emancipated from mere sectarian belief, and with eager interest pushed his investigations in the direction of modern progressive thought. He followed with quickening step into the paths of

exploration and speculation so fearlessly trodden by Darwin, by Huxley, by Tyndall, and by other living scientists of the radical and advanced type. His own Church, binding its disciples by no formulated creed, but accepting the Old and New Testaments as the word of God, with unbiased liberty of private interpretation, favored, if it did not stimulate, the spirit of investigation. Its members profess with sincerity, and profess only, to be of one mind and of one faith with those who immediately followed the Master, and who were first called Christians at Antioch.

But however high Garfield reasoned of "fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute," he was never separated from the Church of the Disciples in his affections and in his associations. For him it held the ark of the covenant. To him it was the gate of Heaven. The world of religious belief is full of solecisms and contradictions. A philosophic observer declares that men by the thousand will die in defense of a creed whose doctrines they do not comprehend and whose tenets they habitually violate. It is equally true that men by the thousand will cling to Church organizations with instinctive and undying fidelity when their belief in maturer years is radically different from that which inspired them as neophytes.

But after this range of speculation, and this latitude of doubt, Garfield came back always with freshness and delight to the simpler instincts of

religious faith, which, earliest implanted, longest survive. Not many weeks before his assassination, walking on the banks of the Potomac with a friend, and conversing on those topics of personal religion concerning which noble natures have an unconquerable reserve, he said that he found the Lord's Prayer and the simple petitions learned in infancy infinitely restful to him, not merely in their stated repetition, but in their casual and frequent recall as he went about the daily duties of life. Certain texts of Scripture had a very strong hold on his memory and his heart. He heard, while in Edinburgh some years ago, an eminent Scotch preacher who prefaced his sermon with reading the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, which book had been the subject of careful study with Garfield during all his religious life. He was greatly impressed by the elocution of the preacher and declared that it had imparted a new and deeper meaning to the majestic utterances of St. Paul. He referred often in after years to that memorable service, and dwelt with exaltation of feeling upon the radiant promise and the assured hope with which the great Apostle of the Gentiles was "persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The crowning characteristic of General Garfield's religious opinions, as, indeed, of all his opinions, was his liberality. In all things he had charity. Tolerance was of his nature. He respected in others the qualities which he possessed himself, sincerity of conviction and frankness of expression. With him the inquiry was not so much what a man believes, but does he believe it? The lines of his friendship and his confidence encircled men of every creed, and men of no creed, and to the end of his life, on his ever-lengthening list of friends, were to be found the names of a pious Catholic priest and of an honest-minded and generous-hearted free-thinker.

On the morning of Saturday, July 2d, the President was a contented and happy man—not in an ordinary degree, but joyfully, almost boyishly happy. On his way to the railroad station, to which he drove slowly, in conscious enjoyment of the beautiful morning, with an unwonted sense of leisure and a keen anticipation of pleasure, his talk was all in the grateful and gratulatory vein. He felt that after four months of trial his administration was strong in its grasp of affairs, strong in popular favor, and destined to grow stronger; that grave difficulties confronting him at his inauguration had been safely passed; that trouble lay behind him and not before him; that he was soon to meet the wife whom he loved, now recovering from an illness which had but lately disqui-

eted and at times almost unnerved him: that he was going to his *Alma Mater* to renew the most cherished associations of his young manhood, and to exchange greetings with those whose deepening interest had followed every step of his upward progress from the day he entered upon his college course until he had attained the loftiest elevation in the gift of his countrymen.

Surely, if happiness can ever come from the honors or triumphs of this world, on that quiet July morning James A. Garfield may well have been a happy man. No foreboding of evil haunted him; no slightest premonition of danger clouded his sky. His terrible fate was upon him in an instant. One moment he stood erect, strong, confident in the years stretching peacefully out before him; the next he lay wounded, bleeding, helpless, doomed to weary weeks of torture, to silence, and the grave.

Great in life, he was surpassingly great in death. For no cause, in the very frenzy of wantonness and wickedness, by the red hand of murder, he was thrust from the full tide of this world's interest, from its hopes, its aspirations, its victories, into the visible presence of death—and he did not quail. Not alone for the one short moment in which, stunned and dazed, he could give up life, hardly aware of its relinquishment, but through days of deadly languor, through weeks of agony, that was not less agony because silently borne, with clear

sight and calm courage, he looked into his open grave. What blight and ruin met his anguished eyes, whose lips may tell?—what brilliant, broken plans; what baffled, high ambitions; what sundering of strong, warm, manhood's friendships; what bitter rending of sweet household ties! Behind him a proud, expectant nation, a great host of sustaining friends, a cherished and happy mother, wearing the full, rich honors of her early toil and tears; the wife of his youth, whose whole life lay in his; the little boys not yet emerged from childhood's days of frolic; the fair young daughter; the sturdy sons just springing into closest companionship, claiming every day and every day rewarding a father's love and care; and in his heart the eager, rejoicing power to meet all demands. Before him, desolation and great darkness! And his soul was not shaken. His countrymen were thrilled with instant, profound, and universal sympathy. Masterful in his mortal weakness, he became the centre of a nation's love, enshrined in the prayers of a world. But all the love and all the sympathy could not share with him his suffering. He trod the wine-press alone. With unfaltering front he faced death. With unfailing tenderness he took leave of life. Above the demoniac hiss of the assassin's bullet he heard the voice of God. With simple resignation he bowed to the Divine decree.

As the end drew near, his early craving for the

sea returned. The stately mansion of power had been to him the wearisome hospital of pain, and he begged to be taken from its prison walls, from its oppressive, stifling air, from its homelessness and its hopelessness. Gently, silently, the love of a great people bore the pale sufferer to the longed-for healing of the sea, to live or to die, as God should will, within sight of its heaving billows, within sound of its manifold voices. With wan, fevered face tenderly lifted to the cooling breeze, he looked out wistfully upon the ocean's changing wonders; on its far sails, whitening in the morning light; on its restless waves, rolling shoreward to break and die beneath the noonday sun; on the red clouds of evening, arching low in the horizon; on the serene and shining pathway of the stars. Let us think that his dying eyes read a mystic meaning which only the rapt and parting soul may know. Let us believe that in the silence of the receding world he heard the great waves breaking on a farther shore, and felt already upon his wasted brow the breath of the eternal morning.